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Katherine A. Towle

ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP

With Introductions by  
Eric E. Bellquist  
and  
Ruth Cherey Streeter

An Interview Conducted by  
Harriet Nathan









Katherine A. Towle  
In her Berkeley home with her dog Spooky  
May 16, 1963



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## University History Series

## PREFACE

Under a grant from the University of California Alumni Foundation, the Regional Oral History Office has been conducting a series of interviews with persons who have made a significant contribution to the development of the University of California at Berkeley. A list of University History interviews follows, including an earlier group which had been conducted in cooperation with the Centennial History Project, directed by Professor Walton E. Bean. The Alumni Foundation grant made it possible to continue this University-centered series, of which this manuscript is a part.

The University History interviews have benefited greatly from the expert advice and assistance of Richard E. Erickson, Executive Manager of the Alumni Association; Arthur M. Arlett, Intercollegiate Athletic Coordinator for Alumni and Public Relations; and Verne A. Stadtman, Centennial Editor.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in recent California history. The Office is under the administrative supervision of the Director of the Bancroft Library.

Willa Baum  
Head, Regional Oral  
History Office

15 July 1968  
Regional Oral History Office  
Room 486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California  
Berkeley, California



Interviews in the University History Series which have been completed by the Regional Oral History Office.

### SERIES I

Birge, Raymond Thayer      Raymond Thayer Birge, Physicist. 1960

Chaney, Ralph Works      Ralph Works Chaney, Ph.D., Paleobotanist, Conservationist. 1960

Hutchison, Claude B.      The College of Agriculture, University of California, 1922-1952. 1962

Lessing, Ferdinand D.      Early Years. 1963

Lenzen, Victor F.      Physics and Philosophy. 1965

Merritt, Ralph P.      After Me Cometh a Builder, the Recollections of Ralph Palmer Merritt. 1962

Meyer, Karl F.      Medical Research and Public Health. In process.

Mitchell, Lucy Sprague      Pioneering in Education. 1962

Olney, Mary McLean      Oakland, Berkeley, and the University of California, 1880-1895. 1963

Neuhaus, Eugen      Reminiscences: Bay Area Art and the University of California Art Department. 1961

Neylan, John Francis      Politics, Law, and the University of California. 1962

Pepper, Stephen C.      Art and Philosophy at the University of California, 1919 to 1962. 1963

Porter, Robert Langley      Robert Langley Porter, Physician, Teacher, and Guardian of the Public Health. 1960

Richardson, Leon J.      Berkeley Culture, University of California Highlights, and University Extension, 1892-1960. 1962

Shields, Peter J.      Reminiscences. 1954

Sproul, Ida Wittschcn      Duty, Devotion and Delight in the President's House, University of California. 1961

Stevens, Frank C.      Forty Years in the Office of the President, University of California, 1905-1945. 1959

Treadway, Walter      Correspondence and Papers on Langley Porter Clinic.  
(Bound into Langley Porter interview.)



Waring, Henry C.	<u>Henry C. Waring on University Extension.</u> 1960
Woods, Baldwin M.	<u>University of California Extension.</u> 1957
Wurster, William Wilson	<u>College of Environmental Design, University of California, Campus Planning, and Architectural Practice.</u> 1964

## SERIES II

Interviews fully or partially funded by the University of California Alumni Foundation.

Blaisdell, Allen C.	<u>Foreign Students and the Berkeley International House, 1928-1961.</u> 1968
Corley, James V.	<u>Serving the University in Sacramento.</u> 1969
Cross, Ira Brown	<u>Portrait of an Economics Professor.</u> 1967
Cruess, William V.	<u>A Half Century in Food and Wine Technology.</u> 1967
Davidson, Mary Blossom	<u>The Dean of Women and the Importance of Students.</u> 1967
Dennes, William R.	<u>Philosophy and the University Since 1915.</u> 1970
Donnelly, Ruth	<u>The University's Role in Housing Services.</u> 1970
Ebright, Carroll "Ky"	<u>California Varsity and Olympics Crew Coach.</u> 1968
Evans, Clinton W.	<u>California Athlete, Coach, Administrator, Ambassador.</u> 1968
Hamilton, Brutus	<u>Student Athletics and the Voluntary Discipline.</u> 1967
Hays, William Charles	<u>Order, Taste, and Grace in Architecture.</u> 1968
Johnston, Marguerite Kulp and Mixer, Joseph R.	<u>Student Housing, Welfare, and the ASUC.</u> 1970
Lehman, Benjamin H.	<u>Recollections and Reminiscences of Life in the Bay Area from 1920 Onward.</u> 1969
Towle, Katherine A.	<u>Administration and Leadership.</u> 1970
Underhill, Robert M.	<u>University of California Lands, Finances, and Investment.</u> 1968
Wessels, Glenn A.	<u>Education of an Artist.</u> 1967
Witter, Jean C.	<u>The University, the Community, and the Lifeblood of Business.</u> 1968



## KATHERINE A. TOWLE, DEAN OF STUDENTS

I can think of no better way to introduce Katherine Towle than to repeat part of a conversation a senior member of her staff had with a young Assistant Dean back in 1964, a year before her retirement. He had been in the office about a year. At a luncheon one day he began talking about Katherine.

"My first impression was the great beauty of the lady. She is one of the most beautiful women I've known. Tall, stately, well proportioned, perfect carriage, beautiful face, majestic white hair, blue eyes, and a complexion to cause envy to every coed. And always, of course, immaculately dressed in the finest taste and perfectly groomed. There is no beauty to compare with that of a mature lady who has led a disciplined, good life with a fine character glowing in her face and every movement.

"Next I noticed her wit, scholarship, and wisdom. As she presides at our staff meetings, her tact can immediately put an end to what appears to be an awkward situation by a timely quote or an apt observation. She is firm but fair and her blue eyes can flash with anger at an inconsiderate or tactless remark or action. But she is always gentle and kind. It is her nature.

"Finally I noticed her grace and charm at University affairs. Just watch her at a tea, the grace of her greetings, the delightful small talk, always the perfect manners. She is a great and immortal lady -- and will live forever in the lives of the thousands of students whose lives she touched at California."

The young Assistant Dean was very perceptive. He painted an excellent portrait of K.A.T. (This is the way she signed memos and other communications. These initials were also paperweights on her desk.)

Katherine Amelia Towle was born on April 30, 1898, in Towle, California, a small timber community about thirty miles below the Donner Summit. It was named for her paternal grandfather and his two brothers who came from Vermont in the early 1850's. Her father was a lumberman born in Dutch Flat. Her mother was from Sacramento. The family moved to Berkeley in 1908 and their home was on Elmwood Avenue and later on Webster Street, below Piedmont. Berkeley has been her residence ever since. She entered Emerson in the sixth grade, went to junior high at McKinley, and was graduated from Berkeley High



in December 1915. She entered the University of California in the autumn of 1916 and received her A.B. in 1920.

Already at Berkeley High, Miss Towle demonstrated the leadership quality which has been so characteristic of her whole life. In the December, 1915, Olla Podrida (the high school yearbook) the listed activities range from the Senior Girls' Pie Sale Committee to the Interscholastic Debating Team, and included the Presidency of the Girls' Association, Vice President of the Forum, Reception Committee for the Senior Dance, the Senior Play Cast, the Olla Podrida staff, and the Weekly News Staff.

At the University she was what at that time was called a PW (Prominent Woman). As a friend from those days states: "She belonged in everything and helped run the campus." The 1920 Blue and Gold lists no less than sixteen activities under her name and photo and these do not include wartime services. She was on the Freshie Glee Committee, on the Daily Californian staff as a Sophomore and Junior, and a member of Torch and Shield. As a Junior she was manager of the Prytanean Fete. In her Senior year she was a member of the General Committee and the Finance Committee for Senior Week, the Student Affairs Committee, and the Labor Day Council. She was President of Prytanean and of her sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta. A Political Science major, Katherine was elected to Alpha Pi Zeta (since 1926 Pi Sigma Alpha), served as its secretary-treasurer, and received honors with her A.B.

During her years as an undergraduate, the United States entered World War I and the University was more or less on a wartime basis. Young men were encamped on the west side of the campus from Oxford to the Eucalyptus Grove and many women students were involved in Red Cross activities. The influenza epidemic was severe and took its toll. Katherine was personally much involved



in both.

A classmate writes that while their paths have never crossed since they were in college together she remembers her well: "As a young woman Katherine showed the distinction that was so apparent in later life. She was always trim and neat, well-groomed, and had that fine carriage which showed up to such advantage when she was in command of the Women Marines. As a student, she was alert, intelligent, conscientious. She had an orderly mind."

Altogether she had an imposing record for a young lady who in taking German as a freshman with another first year girl every Saturday morning at eight o'clock would climb to the fourth floor of old North Hall and sit and giggle for an hour!

After obtaining her degree, Miss Towle did a year of graduate work at Berkeley and then studied at Columbia, 1922-23. She was abroad in 1926-27 and upon her return reported to South Hall and conferred with Professor Frank M. Russell about seeking a doctorate in Political Science with International Relations as a special field. She indicated that she wished to be considered for a Readership and, if possible, a Teaching Assistantship. Instead she briefly was an Assistant in the Admissions Office and then took a post as Resident Dean of the Miss Ransom and Miss Bridges School, 1927-29, where she became headmistress, 1929-32. In January, 1933, she resumed graduate work, was a Teaching Assistant in American Institutions, and in 1935 completed an M.A. dissertation on "The Exercise of the Presidential Veto Since 1889." The Chairman of the Department and a former President of the University, David P. Barrows, was her sponsor.

Miss Towle has stated that she would have continued advanced graduate work but ladies were not then encouraged to seek doctorates. She therefore accepted a post as assistant to the manager and senior editor at the University



of California Press, 1935-43. While there she was approached about joining the Women's Reserve of the United States Marine Corps, having been recommended by Mary B. Davidson, the Dean of Women. She had already taken the physical for the Navy, "thinking I would like to do something for the war." She took military leave from the Press and became one of the first eight women officers (captains) to be members of the Women's Reserve. She had three and one half years of wartime service as a reserve officer, advancing through ranks to Colonel. In June, 1946 she returned to the University, to serve as Senior Administrative Assistant to Vice President and Provost Monroe Deutsch and then as Assistant Dean of Women. With regard to the latter post, Miss Towle has stated: "I had always wanted to be in the Dean of Women's Office, and I served there one and one-half years, very happily." This tour was short.

Following the enactment of the Women's Military Integration Act, Dean Towle resigned from the University in October, 1946, and went to Washington to be commissioned a Colonel and the first Director of the Women's Marine Corps. She served in that capacity until April, 1953, when she reached the mandatory retirement age. A Washington journalist, and a very close friend, wrote: "And she was very beautiful when the marines gave her a farewell parade which coincided with her 55th birthday." For her wartime service in the Marine Corps she received the Navy Commendation Medal and for service as Director of Women Marines was awarded the Legion of Merit.

Meanwhile Mrs. Davidson had retired from the University after ten years as Dean of Women and nearly forty years at her alma mater. There had been no one with that title since she left in 1951. Clark Kerr became Chancellor and wished to fill all key administrative posts. On a trip East he called Colonel Towle and they met in New York to discuss her assuming this position.



He intended to consult President Sproul if she were willing. She was interested but stated that she could not accept until 1953 when she retired from the Corps.

There was a small reception in the President's residence in the spring of 1953. Mrs. Sproul apologized for Dr. Sproul's tardiness. A half hour or so late, the President came up the steps with a lady in uniform on his arm. They were both laughing and in an obviously good mood. A few days later there was a simultaneous announcement from the University and the Marine Corps that Katherine A. Towle upon retiring from the latter would be Dean of Women at Berkeley. Only the fourth lady to hold this position since Lucy Sprague Mitchell's six year tour beginning in 1911, Dean Towle has said that "One of the great joys and privileges of my life was that I should follow these two friends (Lucy Ward Stebbins and Mary B. Davidson) in my own appointment as fourth Dean of Women... All of them have shared in common an abiding concern for the place of women on campus and in the broader community beyond."

K.A.T.'s tour as Dean of Women lasted until 1961 when she was appointed Dean of Students. She held this office until retiring, again at mandatory age, as Dean of Students, Emeritus, in June, 1965. Her last year in office was plagued by what came to be known as the "Free Speech Movement" which actually had little to do with free speech. Katherine Towle happens to believe in free speech and other freedoms as deeply as any man or woman can. She was not responsible for what led to the confrontations of the autumn of 1964. Few had a better understanding of the increasing student concern for more serious issues. Yet there were undoubtedly many students and members of the faculty who failed to appreciate her position and role. The honorary LL.D. conferred



upon Miss Towle by the University in 1968 and her award of the Benjamin Ide Wheeler Medal, October 19, 1965, constitute truer evaluations of the services of this magnificent woman to her university and the community.

Katherine Towle is a member of the American Personnel and Guidance Association, the National Association of Personnel Administrators, and the National Association of Women Deans and Counselors. She was president of the latter, 1957-59. While as Dean of Women and Dean of Students she fully realized the changing and declining role of sororities and fraternities, in vita statements and Who's Who she has always included her living group and recently remarked that "I enjoyed my years in my sorority very much and took an active part in its activities."

She belongs to the American Association of University Women and has been a director of the Berkeley Red Cross and a member of the Advisory Board of the University Y.W.C.A. She has been active in the College Women's Club and is a member of the Women's Faculty Club. Her other clubs are Town and Gown (Berkeley), and Town and Country (San Francisco). She is a member of St. Clement's Episcopal Church in Berkeley.

As already indicated, Katherine is a charming and gracious lady. "Her stature was an inspiration, she is a truly beautiful and stately woman," Mainbocher told the Oakland Tribune as he recalled designing the formal uniform she introduced at the 175th Marine Corps Birthday Ball in the old Sail Loft in Washington in 1950. A friend and contemporary has remarked how "handsome she was in her dress uniform--one was blue and red, I understand--and I saw her receiving her honorary doctorate at Mills College in 1952, in a beautiful white and gold uniform. She responded at lunch, amusingly and delightfully to a toast made by a Marine General." On the campus, when



travelling, and in her very attractive small home not far from the University, she is always well-groomed, a woman of authentic style.

K.A.T. has a delightful sense of humor, a rapier wit, and her laughter is very special--as is the twinkle in her blue eyes.

A fellow Political Science major who was in several classes with Katherine recalls her "slight annoyance over one of our professors who, in spite of being corrected many times, insisted on pronouncing her name as 'Towel,' as she herself said, 'As if I were a bathtowel!' She herself would not have had to be corrected more than once, and was in consequence somewhat impatient with the stupidities of others!" Lest this, our references to uniforms, the military, her bearing, give a wrong impression, it may be related that in a certain very civilized and friendly home in Washington Katherine has always been called "Towleee" and she is still so called among close friends in our nation's capital where she served with such distinction.

In this vein, two anecdotes add to the picture.

In the Corps she quickly set things straight with GIs and officers unaccustomed to (and initially inclined to be amused by) having a lady in command. An officer unwarily addressed her as Miss Towle; her reply to him as "Mister" instead of "colonel" was long quoted around headquarters.

Once she took the train to New York to visit a sister who lived in the East Seventies. She was late in leaving the Pentagon, so she did not have an opportunity to change her clothes and arrived in full regalia. The taxi driver was curious: "So you're a Colonel?" "Yes!" "Well, I guess you will end as a General?" "No, you see, women cannot reach a higher grade than Colonel." "Oh, you're just in a rut, aren't you!"

As President Hitch stated in conferring the LL.D. in 1968, Katherine A. Towle has brought to each of her assignments "rich resources of intelligence



and experienced judgment." As the young Assistant Dean said in 1964, "There is no beauty to compare with that of a mature lady who has led a disciplined, good life with a fine character glowing in her face and every movement."

Eric C. Bell  
June 25, 1971.



## COLONEL KATHERINE A. TOWLE, U.S.M.C.

It has frequently happened in our history that men who have distinguished themselves in war have later held important positions in colleges and universities. They had known and admired the young men of their era and they had looked forward to a continuing relationship with on-coming generations. It did not occur to most people that a similar road might some day be followed by women, nor would this have been possible until recently.

The first person to blaze a trail always needs special courage and competence; but Katherine Towle has these qualities and it was no surprise to those who knew her that she should have been the first woman to become a Colonel in the regular establishment of the United States Marine Corps and later, the first Dean of Students at the University of California at Berkeley.

The ten years which she spent in the Marine Corps were an important part of her life, but one probably little understood by her friends and colleagues in Berkeley. Service in a military organization is an experience so different from any other that it is hard to visualize it unless one has done it oneself. But although "Standard Operating Procedure" is different, people are still people wherever you find them, and consequently the same characteristics which made Katherine Towle an outstanding dean made her also an outstanding Marine Corps officer. All her life she has believed and acted on the concept that if you treated other people fairly, reasonably, and courteously, you could



expect the same response from them. Curiously enough, it was in the free academic world that this philosophy failed temporarily, whereas it worked beautifully in the supposedly rough tough world of the Marines.

Rank is important in the armed forces, but whether she was a Captain or a Colonel, Katherine Towle enjoyed the esteem of all her comrades. She was respectful but unafraid in dealing with her superior officers, who were all men of long service in the Marine Corps. If any of them took a dim view of having women in the Corps, she disarmed them by her intelligence, her devotion to duty, her sense of humor, and her charm. Her influence over the junior women officers, most of them in their twenties, was one of the great assets of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. She lived on the camp with them during their Officer Training School days, knew them all, and some of her idealism rubbed off on them and was carried by them to whatever assignments later came their ways. Although she had genuine respect and liking for young people and they knew this, they also had a healthy awe of her. She stood for no nonsense and did not hesitate to "take appropriate disciplinary action" when necessary. She left her mark on the Marine Corps and it left its mark on her, and the mutual experience was good for them both.

When the Marine Corps Women's Reserve was organized on February 13th, 1943, while World War II was still going badly for our country, Katherine Towle was one of eight senior women commissioned directly from civil life and assigned to key posts without indoctrination. They had to learn by doing instead of being shown the way, but their masculine comrades were patient and they quickly became "good Marines." She was



commissioned a Captain and immediately assigned to the MCWR Training Schools, which was the most important activity during the period when the Women's Reserve was building up from nothing to its full strength of about 18,000 enlisted women and 1,000 women officers.

That point was reached by October, 1944, and as the emphasis on training declined, the need for keeping track of the far-flung activities of the Women Marines increased. As the officer best fitted for this assignment, Katherine Towle was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, made Assistant Director, and assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps in Washington, D.C. She served in this capacity for another fourteen months, helping to develop policies for the Women Marines, to visit the Posts and Stations where they were serving, and to iron out any difficulties which might have arisen.

It was during this period that I knew her best, as I was then the Director of the Women's Reserve. I had long since observed and appreciated her outstanding qualities, but now I came to value her even more highly. Anyone who holds the top job in any organization -- invariably known in military circles as "The Old Man" or "The Old Lady" as the case may be -- knows that it is both a lonely job and one where there is danger of being cut off from things one ought to know. It is a great help to everybody concerned if there is an assistant who can be more easily approached. Such a position, however, requires absolute integrity and trustworthiness, as well as good judgment. In the months we worked together, I found that I could rely absolutely on Katherine Towle's loyalty and discretion, as well as on her analysis of situations, and her advice. I feel sure that my tour of duty was made both easier



and more effective because of her being at my right hand.

Four months after the fall of Japan, my sons began to return from their own tours of duty in the armed forces, two of them having each served for four years in the Navy and the youngest for three years in the Army. Naturally, I wanted to come home, too, and on December 7th, 1945, I was demobilized. There was no question as to who was best fitted to become the next Director, Marine Corps Women's Reserve. Katherine Towle had a distinguished record and her talent for leadership was well known in the Corps.

Leadership is a quality difficult to define, but not difficult to recognize. It may be said to consist of the ability to see what needs to be done and to play one's own part in it; and even more important, the ability to describe what ought to be done so clearly that other people will want to do their share also. Katherine Towle had this quality, and on December 7th, 1945, she was promoted to full Colonel and made Director of the Women's Reserve. Upon demobilization six months later, she returned to Berkeley, having received the Navy Commendation Medal, as well as the World War II and American Theatre medals.

In the summer of 1948, her work at the University of California was interrupted by a summons from the Marine Corps. Congress had just passed a law permitting women to become members of the Regular Establishments of the armed forces. To civilians this does not mean much, but it was a shock to some of the men in the Services, although the Services themselves had requested the law.

Women now became directly competitive with career men, whereas they were all Reservists during World War II and presumably would go back home



as soon as it ended and stay there! It was a ticklish situation and much would depend on the ability and tact of the first Director of Women, United States Marine Corps. The Commandant at that time, General Cates, did not know Colonel Towle personally, but she had left such a fine record behind her that he asked her to come back and assume this responsibility. She, therefore, returned to duty in the Marine Corps in 1948, and served for nearly five years more. Under her direction, the women who wished to make a career of the military profession were guided into many interesting and useful positions and became accepted by the Corps.

Until recently, Women Marine Officers had to retire at the age of fifty-five years and in due time, this moment arrived. The Marine Corps was sorry to see Colonel Towle go and it paid her its finest tributes. She was awarded the Legion of Merit, the highest decoration given to women by the Marine Corps, and the citation included in her own "history" shows what the Marine Corps thought of her. She was also tendered a Retreat Review. These Reviews are very impressive affairs. They are conducted by the special ceremonial detachment at Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C., and led by the famous Marine Band. As the drill ground is directly back of the Commandant's house, he usually watches the ceremony. But the honor of being the Reviewing Officer is one that is carefully cherished and offered to very few people. The Marine Corps took pleasure in recognizing one of its distinguished officers by tendering this honor to Colonel Katherine A. Towle.

There was another nice touch in connection with her retirement, and this came from the newspapers. The Washington correspondents are selected



from among the smartest and ablest journalists available, but a few years in the capital city makes them rather cynical. They had, however, seen Colonel Towle at many functions around Washington, had noticed her dignity and charm, had sensed her rare quality and enjoyed it. In their book, the retirement of a Woman Director is not very important news and it usually rates only a small paragraph on an inconspicuous page. But when they heard that Colonel Towle was leaving, they gave her a two-column picture of the Commandant awarding her the Legion of Merit under the cheerful and affectionate caption, "So Long, Colonel Kate."

It was my good fortune to have served with her, and I am pleased and proud to have been given the opportunity of writing this introduction to her memoirs.

RUTH CHENEY STREEETER  
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve (Retired)

Morristown, New Jersey  
December, 1969



## INTERVIEW HISTORY

The memoirs of Katherine A. Towle, Dean of Students, Emeritus, are part of the University History Series supported by the Alumni Foundation.

## Dates of

Interviews:	August 10, 1967	October 19, 1967
	August 24, 1967	October 26, 1967
	August 31, 1967	November 10, 1967
	September 1 <sup>st</sup> , 1967	November 17, 1967
	October 12, 1967	December 8, 1967

In addition, conversations about editing and the collection of documents took place during 1968. Early in her career, Miss Towle had worked as an editor at the University Press, and consequently handled the organizing and editing of her memoirs herself. She also prepared a collection of supplementary documents for deposit in the Bancroft Library.

## Location:

The interviews took place in the study of Miss Towle's hillside home at the top of Dwight Way in Berkeley. The morning sessions were usually two hours long, interrupted occasionally by incoming telephone calls or her long-eared dog's investigation of the turning wheels of the tape recorder. Miss Towle spoke easily of her wide range of activities, treating even her most arduous experiences with candor, detachment, and a sparkling wit whose point was most often directed at herself. Her zest and willingness to try new ventures were evident throughout the narrative and, as she would say, "We worked very hard, but that's all part of the job, and of course I did enjoy it."

Interviewer: Harriet Nathan

24 July 1970  
Regional Oral History Office  
486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California at Berkeley



## THE TOWLE FAMILY

Nathan: Miss Towle, we might begin with something about your parents, your family.

Towle: Yes, all right. That's as good a starting point as any. I really don't know too much about the Towles. The first settler in this country by the name of Towle with whom I am connected--presumably all the Towles as a matter of fact, settled in Hampton, New Hampshire, I think about 1640. He was a Philip, one l and one p, Towle. No one is quite sure just where he came from. I believe the ancestry is English.

My paternal grandfather came from Vermont. The branch of the family to which I belong evidently went from New Hampshire across the border to Vermont. We hear early stories of a Brackett Towle, who was in the Revolutionary War--Lieutenant Colonel Brackett Towle--going over the mountains from New Hampshire on a sled to Vermont. What he was doing on the sled and how he got the sled I wouldn't know. The headstone on his grave in East Corinth indicates that he was born in 1731. My branch of the Towle family did settle, then, in Vermont, in East Corinth. This is where my grandfather and his two brothers and two sisters were all born.

Nathan: What was your grandfather's name?

Towle: His name was Allen, A-double l-e-n. He was the one who came to California arriving in January of 1856. He set out from Vermont in December. He left by boat from New York and came over the Panama Isthmus. He was born in 1833, and left Vermont in 1855. So that would make him about twenty-two, wouldn't it?



From Vermont to California

Nathan: Did he indicate why he came?

Towle: Yes. He apparently was quite up and coming. His mother's family had an ice business in New York and he had been sent there, after he finished the Corinth Academy, to go to work. In the meantime his father had discovered copper in Corinth. So this boy, young Allen, decided to go back home, or was sent back home by the firm. I believe there was some firm or some group of people who put up money to develop this mine, and they sent him home to look after their interests. Some of his friends, or townspeople from Corinth, had come out to California in the gold rush. He became very much interested in this himself, so decided to go to California.

Nathan: So it was the mining.

Towle: Mining drew him first, but, when he got here he became very much interested in lumber. He evidently worked in the mines, I don't know how long, and accumulated a little money. Then he bought from some man or some group of people, sawmill equipment and went to work up around--Towle's Station they called it in those days--where Towle was finally situated. That was just above Dutch Flat. I say "was" because now there really isn't anything there. Highway 80 goes right through everything, all the places where our houses stood. But it's up in the foothills, about 3300 feet high. Awfully pretty country, really, at least it was. Do you know where Lake Alta is?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: Towle is a mile above Lake Alta. It was on the transcontinental railroad. My grandfather was smart enough to recognize the fact that providing lumber for the Central Pacific Railroad, which was about to be established, would be, probably, a very prosperous and desirable thing. I gather that he did prosper.



Nathan: Did he make railroad ties?

Towle: Yes. He made railroad ties and sold them for the new railroad. And one of the wagon roads that he put in through that country was where the old mine was--it went into the Comstock mines, actually. He was still interested in mining, but lumbering came to be his chief interest.

Nathan: Did he prepare any timbers for mines?

Towle: Yes, I believe he did. And then this wagon road that led into the Comstock mines, part of it became the bed of the Central Pacific Railroad up through the mountains there. He was very active. He sent for his two brothers, George W. and Edwin, to come out to be in business with him. Then two sisters arrived some time later and married and settled in California. Well, Towle in the early days was mostly just a sawmill community. Later Towle Brothers had fifteen sawmills around in various places in that part of the country.

Nathan: Was there a lot of water there? Don't the logs require water for moving around?

Towle: They brought the logs out almost entirely by railroad. There were some thirty miles of narrow gauge railroad to bring out the logs. It was quite an operation, I gather. Unfortunately, my grandfather died the year before I was born. He died in 1897, and I was born in 1898, so that I never knew him. Everyone says that he was a very fine person--tall and handsome. I have a picture of him somewhere. After his brothers arrived, they established what was known as Towle Brothers Company, and that was in existence until October, 1966, when we dissolved it as a family company.

Nathan: Was that a lumbering company?

Towle: Originally, but it finally became a private holding company, because we still have a lot of land around Towle and Soda Springs and up in that part of California, in the northern part.



### The Caboose at Dutch Flat

Nathan: Do you ever have the feeling when you are riding on the railroads, that you're riding over your grandfather's railroad ties? [Laughter]

Towle: I'm afraid those were gone a long time ago. The lumber was also used in those early days to build snowsheds, you see, when the new railroad was put through.

At a Dutch Flat Fourth of July Celebration in 1963 my cousins and my two sisters and I--descendants of the original Towle brothers--gave to the town of Dutch Flat as an historical site--an exact replica of one of the little cabooses, narrow-gauge track and all--that used to run on the narrow-gauge railroad owned and operated by the Towle Brothers Company in their hey-day as a lumbering concern in the Sierra foothills.

My grandfather had arrived at just the right time and evidently had enough, you know, gumption and interest and ability to make a very good thing of this. In early 1869, he was married in Dutch Flat to Ella Halsey, whose family had come out from New York. They had four children, the eldest of whom was my father--the only boy. He was born there.

They had a very nice, comfortable, Victorian home. In fact, the three brothers all built homes in Dutch Flat at that time, because it was so close to Towle, and then later on they all built homes up in Towle. I was born in my grandfather's house at Towle. My father and mother were living there then. My grandfather and grandmother also had built a very nice home in Sacramento, when their children were fairly young, so that they could attend the schools and have other advantages of city living.

Nathan: I see. So your father went to school in Sacramento.

Towle: Yes, part of the time. Then later on he went to St. Matthews, an Episcopal school in San Mateo.

Nathan: What was your father's name?



Towle: My father's name was George G., and G. was for Gould.

The Town of Towle

Towle: Of course my grandfather's house is no longer in existence. The town of Towle used to be, as I said, called Towle's Station, and then later it was just called Towle; it was on the main railroad. I can remember the great excitement, when I was a child, of the transcontinental train going through Towle. Everybody would rush out--I think it went through in the latter part of the afternoon; that's what I remember anyway--and we used to run up to watch. This was a great thing every day, you know. We'd go up, and the train would stop, and we'd be on the platform, and wave to the passengers. [Laughter]

Nathan: I still feel that way about trains.

Towle: Yes. I do, too. I think children today, who have no experience with trains at all and don't even know what it is to ride on a train have missed an awful lot, because there is a sort of romance about it that I don't think you get any other way.

How my father and mother happened to live in Towle was that he worked for his father, you see. I think he was a bookkeeper for the business in Towle. By that time Towle had a hotel, a school, a store, a town hall and all, and many houses for the men and their families, which had been put up by the company. It was a fairly sizable place. There were a lot of men who worked in the mills who came out from Vermont, because they knew that my grandfather was being successful, and was glad to have them come. He gave work to a lot of young Vermonters who came out to settle here.

Nathan: So it really was a company town.

Towle: Yes, more or less. Then after my grandfather's death, the assets of the business itself, like the



Towle: mills and all, were sold to other lumber companies, one in Canada and I've forgotten where else. I think some here in the West. And the box factory, which the Towle brothers had in Sacramento, continued in operation for many years, in fact, until about 1960 or '59. Of course I inherited an interest in this, and my sisters did too, through mother really; they were father's interests, but he died before she did. The box factory was in existence from about 1852 although the Towle brothers didn't acquire it until the late '50's. It was known as the Capitol Box Factory.

Of course, as you know, later on, boxes were no longer needed very much. Everything was pretty much plastic, things of that sort. The factory used to make many boxes for fruits and berries and oranges, but the business really couldn't support itself after a while, and we decided just to dissolve it, and sell the building and equipment.

#### Relatives from Sacramento and the Mountains

My mother's family, I don't know too much about. They were German-Swiss, I know that. My mother's name was Kate Meister, and her mother was German, quite German, a typical matriarch, and her father was Swiss, who came to Sacramento in 1850. I never met my grandfather, my maternal grandfather, because like my paternal grandfather he died before I was born. My grandmother I remember vaguely. But you see my mother died a week after I was born, so that I didn't know my mother's family particularly well. I see a few of them who are left in Sacramento--they came from Sacramento. My grandfather Meister was in the dairy business in Sacramento in the early days and his son, my uncle, George Meister, who died recently, was in the dairy business until he retired a good many years ago. Then my father married again when I was about a year and a half old, and I was brought up by my stepmother, but to me she was mother.



Nathan: Yes. And what was her name?

Towle: Her name was Brice, Bertha Brice. And she was a lovely, wonderful person. Her father was an Englishman who also had come over to work in the mines, apparently, at one time. I don't know too much about him. His name was James Fletcher. I had an older sister who died; she was four years older than I. She died when she was eighteen, so I would have been fourteen. So I was the only one of the first marriage living; my father and mother had three children by the second marriage. I have two half-sisters living here in the Bay area, and a brother who died, oh, a good many years ago now. So that's my background.

My stepmother was born in California also, in Mokolumne Hill up in the mountains. So we've come from the mountain areas, the foothill areas, of California.

Nathan: I was thinking back to the lumbering at Towle--is that still going on, or has that come to an end?

Towle: That came to an end very shortly after my grandfather's death. His brother, George, who became, after grandfather Towle's death, a sort of patriarch of the family, carried it on for a while with my father. The younger brother, Edwin, died fairly young, and then my great-uncle, George, decided--in discussion with my father, of course, who had inherited his father's interests in the mills, etc. along with his sisters--that they would give it up as a business, and they evidently had very good offers from other lumber companies. My great-uncle George came to San Francisco and lived there the rest of his life. He and his wife had no children. At least they had a child, but it didn't live. They lived on Broadway in San Francisco for many, many years. He was quite elderly when he died. Father lived in Towle that year or so after the death of my mother. Then not too long after his second marriage the family moved to East Oakland, and we lived there until 1908, I believe it was, when we came to Berkeley.

Nathan: I see. So your own parents didn't go to Sacramento.



Towle: No. My father lived in Sacramento part of the time when he was a boy, because his father and mother had their home there and used to go up to Towle then just for the summers, you see, or for the business. But I never lived in Sacramento. One of my father's sisters lived there, whom we used to visit often. We always went up to Towle in the summer, as long as I can remember, I guess until about the second year that I was in college, and then we didn't go so regularly.

Nathan: Is it a place that you still have some affection for?

Towle: Oh, yes. Very real affection for it. I felt sad the old house was torn down and all, and yet, on the other hand, no one was living there, and in some ways it was much better to have it demolished than to have it just sort of go to pieces. For a while we had someone living there, but it became increasingly more difficult to find someone who was willing to live there and take care of it. Really, in the last few years it was sort of falling apart, not too much was done with it.

Nathan: How did your family determine to settle in Berkeley finally?

Towle: I think it was because they thought the schools would be good for us, for the children. And it really didn't matter to my father too much. There was the Towle Estate Company, also a family holding company, which still goes on, and Towle Brothers Company. My father managed both and had an office in San Francisco. The office was burned out during the fire and earthquake. We were living in East Oakland then. I can remember my father insisting on going across to San Francisco to see if he could save anything out of the office. And, of course, he was not allowed to go into the building.

Nathan: Were the ferries running then?

Towle: The ferries were running then, but he got the last one back to Oakland that day at that particular time.



Nathan: That was pretty brave of him, to want to go into the fire.

Towle: Yes. Well, he wanted to see what he could save.

Nathan: Where was the location of his office?

Towle: I'm trying to think what building it was. I think it was called the Foxcroft Building, and I'm not quite sure just where that was.

Nathan: But that was leveled, wasn't it?

Towle: Well, if it wasn't leveled, it was so badly gutted with fire that things were destroyed, because I know there were a lot of things in our home for a long time that had been through the fire.

Nathan: Did he lose all his business records and that sort of thing?

Towle: Some of them. Yes, I think he did.

Nathan: Did you remember seeing the city on fire?

Towle: I was then about eight years old, and I can remember looking out from our house and seeing the red in the sky from where we were in East Oakland. I think I can remember the earthquake definitely myself, because of course I was old enough to. But I don't remember any particular sensations except that, because we didn't know what it was. At least the children didn't. And then, of course, there was all the excitement about what was happening in San Francisco.

Nathan: Did you go over to see the city?

Towle: Not right away, no. I was taken over some time later to see it. But my impressions of it are not very vivid.

Nathan: Were there people coming to East Oakland from the city to be looked after?

Towle: Yes. That's right.



Schools in Berkeley

Nathan: So then your family moved to Berkeley?

Towle: A little later. The fire and earthquake were in 1906, and my brother was born in December of that year, so we were still living in Oakland at that time. I think we actually didn't come to Berkeley until 1908. I went to the old Franklin School in East Oakland.

I'm quite certain the family's decision to move was because of the schools, and Berkeley was then a very attractive place to live. We rented a house on what was then called Elmwood Avenue. It's now Ashby Place. You know, it's down there off College Avenue. Those were just nothing but fields, you know. There were a few houses, ours among them. We rented the house from some people here in Berkeley. And then later on, two years later, my father bought a lot on Webster Street. That's one block over--in that same area. And that was even more remote--nothing around it, and we built a house there. We lived there for many years. Well, as a matter of fact, my father died in 1941, and mother continued to live there until she bought her little house on Derby Street during the war. She lived in the big house at least three years, I guess, after his death, two years anyway.

Nathan: I don't know if I have your brother's name.

Towle: Allen. John Allen, but he was always known as Allen.

Nathan: So you then grew up mostly in Berkeley?

Towle: I grew up mostly in Berkeley. Yes, I'm a product primarily of the Berkeley schools. As I told you, I was in the Franklin School in East Oakland, and then when we moved to Berkeley I went to the Emerson School.

Nathan: Oh, you did.

Towle: Yes, indeed. I'm an Emerson graduate.



Nathan: That must have been the old Emerson School.

Towle: Yes, the old Emerson. I think I was in about the fifth grade when I came there. I don't remember exactly, but it seems to me that it's about then.

Nathan: Are you one of those who remember teachers in grammar school?

Towle: Well, I can remember some. I can remember one I thought was simply wonderful, and I was sure then, you know, that she must have been quite old. Miss Juth was her name. In fact, all the children thought she was wonderful. She was so pretty, but she seemed older than I don't know what to us. I think she probably was just out of college, [laughter] with her first teaching job. The Emerson School-- we only went I think to the seventh grade there-- and then the McKinley School was where we went as sort of a junior high school. The old building is still there down here on Dwight Way. You know, it's the continuation high school. It's practically falling down, in fact, I think it's been condemned.

Nathan: Probably. But I think it's still in use anyway.

Towle: Well, it's in use for something. But that was where I went for what I suppose now is called the junior high school. I don't know that we called it a junior high school then. And then from there I went to Berkeley High School, the old Berkeley High School, at the same location, however, as the present one. And graduated from there in December, 1915. I stayed out six months before going to college in the fall semester. I never had any idea of going anywhere else except to the University of California. There was never any question in my mind, and my family never even discussed it. It was taken for granted that we were going to Berkeley.

Towle: Had any of the other members of your family gone to the University of California?

Towle: No. I was the first one. Well, one of my uncles by marriage was a graduate of the University. One of my father's sisters married a man who had graduated from the University, class of 1903. But we had no direct connection. My father didn't go to



Towle: college, and mother had gone to the San Jose State Normal School. She had taught before she married my father. As I mentioned earlier, my father was first married in 1892 to Kate Meister, and then his second marriage was in about 1899. But mother had been teaching for two years after she finished the normal school in San Jose. It's a forerunner, you know, of what is now San Jose State College.

Nathan: Were you an avid reader in your school days?

Towle: I read a great deal--I liked to read--when I was a child, and I like to read now, except I'm not able to very much, because I have an eye impediment which prevents me from doing much reading. I was always a good student. I wasn't Phi Beta Kappa unfortunately, but that was because I got off to a bad start in my sophomore year. I was not very well, and instead of stopping, taking leave, and having my tonsils out, which were part of the trouble, I allowed myself to get three C's or the equivalent thereof. [Laughter] Yes, I had to drop down to quite a light load, but I only got C's in 9 units, and of course that just did that to my record.

Nathan: Isn't it curious, after all the distinctions of a lifetime, that's the thing that you remember?  
[Laughter]

Towle: That's the thing I remember. That's right. Otherwise my record is really very good. [Laughter]

Nathan: But there's something so inexorable about an academic record.

Towle: Once it's there, there's nothing you can do about it. But I loved my four years in the University. Oh, I stayed out those six months because my family, and I think my mother particularly--my father didn't care whether I went in the winter or not--but mother thought that it would be better and that I would enjoy the University more by going in with a regular class, and I think she was absolutely right.



High School Activities

Nathan: When you were in high school, were you involved in the school paper?

Towle: Yes. Oh, I was involved in the school paper, and I was one of the speakers at the high school graduation.

Nathan: Who was the principal then?

Towle: Mr. Biedenbach. Carl Biedenbach. He was the principal for years of the Berkeley High School.

Nathan: And do you remember what you talked about in your speech?

Towle: As I recall, it was "Opportunity and Obligation"-- something original like that! Oh, and I was on a debating team in high school.

Nathan: That must have been fun.

Towle: That was kind of fun. I can only recall two debates. One of them was quite exciting, and I don't even remember what we debated on. But one of the judges for the debate was from Auburn, who had graduated from the University. I don't recall which side won, but I do remember the incident. The debate was held in the Berkeley High School auditorium.

Nathan: Oh, that's really quite impressive. And I guess there must have been yearbooks surely.

Towle: Yes. Olla Podrida it was called.

Nathan: It's still the same, sometimes called The Pod.

Towle: Is that just the same? Someone told me they had looked at an old Olla Podrida not long ago [laughter] and discovered my picture. I can't imagine what we looked like. I had braids around my head as I recall it. You know, like this. [Gesturing] We wore our hair that way.



Towle: As for the six months between high school and college, don't ask me what I was doing. I really don't remember. I probably took music lessons; we all took music lessons.

Nathan: Piano?

Towle: Piano. Oh, yes. Until I went to college I took music lessons regularly, so I'm sure I was practicing.

Nathan: Do you play still at all?

Towle: No. I haven't played for years. That is one of the things I thought maybe I would do, but I haven't done it yet.

Nathan: It's tempting.

Towle: I think I would enjoy it.

Nathan: Were you interested in athletics at all?

Towle: No, I was not an athlete. I used to play tennis, but was not really an athlete in any sense of the word.



## THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY

Nathan: So you went to Cal then, in the fall.

Towle: I went to the University in September, 1916--no it was August, because we were on that semester basis; you went in August and got through before Christmas.

Nathan: At that time did you feel that you knew most of the people in your class?

Towle: Well, I think that you did have that feeling. I'm perfectly certain that if I ever go to a class reunion, which so far I have avoided [laughter]...

Nathan: That's very cagey of you.

Towle: If I'm still around when we have our fiftieth which won't be long, 1970, I may go then, because I shall be very curious to see how everybody's weathered the years. [Laughter]

Nathan: Well, let me encourage you. Somehow you feel better, I think, because everybody looks just about the way they ought to. [Laughter]

Towle: So I can't spoil my record by going to a reunion until the fiftieth. [Laughter] Well, anyhow, as I remember it, we had a very good class. Oh, there were a lot of people that I knew very well in the class. You know, I don't think that we ever thought about whether the University was large or small. Of course, it was comparatively small then. There couldn't have been more than 2,000 in my class, and I'm not sure there were even that many in the 1920 class. That's about the way the classes ran. I was in everything; and had a wonderful time.

Nathan: Yes. I looked at that list of your activities, and I wondered how you managed to keep up your good scholastic average, because I don't think you missed a thing.



Towle: No, I didn't miss much, I assure you. And I enjoyed everything about college. Students now would consider me terribly square, you know, because I just did all the things that one did in college.  
[Laughter]

Nathan: Maybe you knew something they don't know.

Towle: Well, maybe I did.

### Sororities Then and Now

Nathan: How did you get started in publications?

Towle: While I was in college, I had been on the paper, on the Daily Californian, oh, I guess ever since I was a freshman. You see, that was one thing that the sororities did at that time. They insisted you go out for some extracurricular activity. I joined the Thetas, the Kappa Alpha Thetas. Nobody thought much about whether you belonged to a sorority or not, except that all my friends did. Most of the students I knew, most of the young people whom I knew then, were associated with fraternities and sororities, no particular reason, except that they were. I enjoyed my association with the Theta house very much. I was president of the chapter my senior year and lived there. The other three years I lived at home, but was at the house a great deal and around at other people's houses too, you know. It was a very real give and take in those days, and we had fun running in and out of each other's sorority houses. Of course, we didn't go running into the fraternity houses, as they do now. We knew lots of fraternity men; we knew lots of other men. I would say that the fraternities and sororities at that time were quite influential on the campus. It just happened that way. And of course now the whole tenor has changed, and I think this is probably a very good thing.

Nathan: When you were a young person, as a member of a sorority, did you have any feeling about exclusion?



Towle: It bothered me, and I know it bothered others in our chapter, when we didn't take somebody whom we felt would be very unhappy about it. This happened all the time. But you know when you're young, and you're doing things yourself, you don't dwell too much on these questions, as much as you should, probably, or as much as young people do today. I just don't know. I think we didn't like the system particularly, but we didn't know what to do about it.

I really wouldn't have missed it for anything, and I think a lot of us felt that way at the time. I still believe that fraternities and sororities have a place on the campus for certain types of students, particularly those who feel lost in a big campus situation. I think they can offer something to students, if they're properly run and are in tune with the times. But I think the exclusive part is bad--of course many feel they are exclusive when they really aren't any longer, and shouldn't be.

Nathan: No. There has certainly been a policy change in recent years.

Towle: Oh, yes, and to everyone's benefit.

Nathan: What do you feel were your benefits?

Towle: For one thing I made many very close friends, whom I've continued to enjoy. All the years that I was working I didn't see very much of some of them, but they're friends whom I have always kept. And I think that this has meant a great deal to me. Now that I'm older and all, I've made so many other friends that that part doesn't enter into it particularly. I have just as many friends who never were members of a sorority as I have friends who were. In fact, most of my classmates aren't here, so I don't see them often any more in any event.

Speaking of policy changes concerning fraternities and sororities, as we were a moment ago, I consider one of my major accomplishments to be my involvement for over five years (1959-64) in helping to bring about the acceptance of the University's policy on non-discrimination in living



Towle: groups as stated by the Regents and President Kerr, especially as it applied to fraternal groups.

Those were difficult days and I was attacked many times by old-line alumni advisers of those groups for my support of the requirement that active chapter presidents be required to sign, as a condition for "recognition" by the University, an affidavit certifying that members are selected for membership without regard to race, color, or creed. To the great credit of the student chapters, there was practically no dissent among them, but with the strong hold that national officers exercise over college chapters, particularly among the sororities, there was much bitterness and often acrimony--at times approaching open warfare. That we came out of it reasonably intact and with one hundred percent of the active chapter presidents finally signing the certificate by our holding steadfastly to the "winds of change," was no mean achievement. I understand that there are still grumblings from a few die-hards.

Nathan: I wondered whether you picked up any ideas in the sorority about working with women or organizing people?

Towle: Not really, I think, but I did enjoy, for instance, being president of my chapter house. I've always liked administrative work, and have had a kind of a flair for it, too. Not that being president of a sorority house is particularly administrative, but it does mean handling people.

Nathan: The personal relationships are important.

Towle: Yes, the personal relationships, and I've always liked being with people and am interested in what makes them tick.



Campus Recollections

Nathan: Did your literary interest then continue in college?

Towle: Yes, I suppose you could call it that.

You've also asked how I became interested in political science. I don't really--well, I do know. I really had planned to go into law school, and as a matter of fact I was admitted to law school. You see the requirements were different from what they are now. You took a couple of years of undergraduate work, and then as a junior were admitted to the law school for pre-legal work, they called it. I was admitted to that.

Nathan: Was it Boalt Hall then?

Towle: Yes. But it wasn't where it is now. You know where California Hall is?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: Well, it was that little building next to it. I think--what do they call that now, Durant Hall?

Nathan: I think so. But even in 1941, which was my class, law students were still there.

Towle: Were they still there? I've forgotten when they went up here on Bancroft to the law complex. Of course, when I was in college, the campus was so entirely different from what it is now. Harmon Gym, for example, was on the edge of Strawberry Creek, where Dwinelle is. Harmon Gymnasium was the men's gym, but it was also the meeting place for everything. I suppose it would be like Wheeler Auditorium, only more so, because there wasn't anything else. It was the biggest place on the campus for indoor meetings. Wheeler Hall was finished just about the time I came to college. I had classes in old North Hall, too. And that was, as you know, eventually torn down to make way for the Library Annex. I can remember taking a German class--I think it was a German class--in old North



Towle: Hall. You had to go through various rooms to get to your class.

Nathan: Like a railroad flat?

Towle: Yes. You didn't go in from a hallway. You had better be on time too, you know, because otherwise you disturbed other classes. [Laughter] And there was a regular stove in the room.

Nathan: A wood burning or coal stove?

Towle: A wood burning or coal stove or something. That was in old North Hall.

Nathan: It was built almost like a residence in the mountains.

Towle: Well, there were several buildings like that. Budd Hall, I'm trying to think whether the Stephens Union was built on that land or whether it was farther along--it was over in that general direction, and I remember having zoology in that building. Then, of course, the Campanile was there, and fairly new, but Bacon Hall was still there and the old red brick engineering building. Of course South Hall was there, and North Hall. The original buildings, that whole complex was there.

Nathan: Was the Doe Library there?

Towle: Yes, it was there. They built on a periodical room, as I recall it, and then later on, you see, that whole complex, where I guess the Oral History Office is now. Aren't you up on the fourth floor in the newer part of the library?

Nathan: Yes, in that annex.

Towle: I don't remember just when that was built. I was out of college when that went up.

Nathan: Yes. Well, I think that's been built recently, you know, within the last twenty or twenty-five years.

Towle: Yes, it has been. In my time, California Hall was the center of activity because that's where the



Towle: President's office was, and the Dean of Women and the Dean of Undergraduates, and the Recorder's Office, as we knew it, and the Comptroller. Mr. Sutton, James Sutton, was the recorder.

The campus was much more wooded, had much more green space about it than it does now, though I must say that I think that they've done an amazingly good job with the campus and with the landscaping, considering how many buildings had to be put into the original campus itself. The part that I felt saddest about, I think, was when they had to take the Botanical Garden down in that swale in front of the library, you know. That was a beautiful garden to look at and to walk through. Of course that had to be taken for parking!

Nathan: That was just north of the library?

Towle: It's where there's a great parking lot below Haviland Hall and down next to the temporary buildings where I guess the counselling center and all those people are now.

Nathan: That was before my time; I never knew it had a garden.

Towle: No, you wouldn't have. Now, I don't know when the parking area was put in there, but the Botanical Garden has been gone a long time. And then the little observatory was up there on a hill. I didn't get onto the north side of the campus very much. I didn't seem to have classes over there. Then the old Hearst Gymnasium for women was on the corner of Bancroft and College--it was a Maybeck building, very attractive--that's the one that burned down in 1921 or somewhere in there. It was after I was out of college, but I was around Berkeley then and on the campus. That burned down, and Mr. Hearst gave them money for the present gymnasium in honor of his mother. But the campus at that time just went to Sather Gate.

Nathan: Yes, of course.

Towle: You see, I mean actually to Sather Gate.



Nathan: And outside Sather Gate was...

Towle: Oh, there was that whole commercial part of Telegraph Avenue. Of course Sproul Hall wasn't there until much later. And along Telegraph to Sather Gate were all stores and little shops.

Nathan: I remember the little dress shops.

Towle: Yes. Dress shops and places to eat, and the original Black Sheep restaurant was there in that block on the east side of the street.

Nathan: And the Varsity.

Towle: And the Varsity was on the corner of Bancroft and Telegraph. In my day that was the great meeting place after two o'clock classes. You went over there and met all your pals. I remember a friend and I used to go--how we stood it for a whole semester I will never know--but I recall that we went practically every week day afternoon after our two o'clock class--that would be a little after three--and got a chocolate sundae.

Nathan: You did? And you didn't lose your figure forever?  
[Laughter]

Towle: I remember that so clearly--funny little things like that, you know. All the people came in there.

### Campus Affairs and World War I

Towle: One of the things which people always ask me--students always used to ask me--what was it like on the campus when you were a student? Did you do certain things? Were you interested in what went on outside, and all this sort of thing? It's been an awfully long time since I was in college, and your memory plays tricks on you.



Towle: But I think there's absolutely no comparison as far as my college generation and the present college generation go, for instance, in the interest in things around them. We were very much circumscribed--almost entirely--by just campus affairs, and the outside world didn't mean so much to us in terms of affecting our particular lives. Now there were two incidents when I was an undergraduate which more or less belie that statement.

And those were first, World War I, and the United States' involvement in it. Of course, it had a short duration, but the training of the R.O.T.C. units was there on the campus.

Nathan: You saw them drilling?

Towle: Oh, yes. We used to go to the parades. Of course, we knew so many of the men who were in the unit, and they had a drill field--well, I'm trying to think where it would be on the present campus.

Nathan: Is it where Dwinelle is now?

Towle: Yes, it was down in there, down in that general area. I can't pinpoint just exactly where it was, because there was a street that ran down from Sather Gate. Down on the corner, for instance, was the Y.W.C.A. and then farther on down was Stiles Hall, the Y.M.C.A. Now those were really off campus; they were on Allston Way, but not actually on campus. All the drilling and training of the men must have taken place either where the Life Sciences Building is, down in that part--because the Life Sciences Building wasn't there then--or farther down toward the entrance, the west entrance, which was not as it is now. In other words, I can't quite remember, or I may be even way off, and it may have been over near Edwards Stadium, the track stadium, down in there.

In any event we used to go down to see the men drill, and there was a parade usually. I don't think it was every night, but there was a parade at least once a week, and, of course, all the girls used to go down and see friends drilling, and this was a great excitement. Also a great many people from Berkeley, the townspeople, were interested in this.



Nathan: Did they have a band too?

Towle: Oh, yes. I think so. I think we had the works, and we were all very thrilled about this.

Then the other thing, of course, was the flu epidemic of 1918. Every available space on campus was used for taking care of students who were ill as well as others. Those were the two outside events that stand out in my memory as really touching all of us, some more than others. Many of our friends had someone in their families who took the flu. Some died, because it was very severe, and many of us were also ill ourselves. I happened to be one of them. It was a year of personal tragedy for a lot of people in Berkeley, because they lost persons close to them in this flu epidemic.

Nathan: Did you go home to recuperate?

Towle: Yes, I lived in Berkeley, you see, my family lived in Berkeley. Fortunately I didn't have one of the heavier cases, but I remember I had to be out. It happened just at the end of the semester--you see, our semesters ended then in December, and I know that it was that whole Christmas holiday and part of the next year. That would have been Christmas of 1918. I wasn't ill in the same sense that other people were, but I had it. I can always say I had the 1918 flu. Those were the two main events.

Otherwise, things on the outside did not touch us the way they do the student today. We were much less sophisticated--I suppose that's the word to use--about outside events, or events off campus.

Nathan: Were you at all aware of the workings of the city of Berkeley, municipal problems, at all?

Towle: Not particularly. I heard them discussed at home, because I lived at home, and my father and mother were interested, as citizens of Berkeley, and they used to discuss things. We always had more or less discussions of this kind going on around at our house, various things that were of interest, but it was kind of on the periphery. I'm sure that I learned a great deal from these discussions, or from



Towle: the talk that went on in our own home and around the dinner table, but I don't recall that we discussed them particularly on campus. I think this is the great difference between the students of my generation and the students of the last several generations. Their own involvement and interest actively in what goes on around them is an excellent thing. With us, it wasn't an intended callousness, it was just that our lives were circumscribed almost entirely by our college activities, our classes, our studies, and the many extracurricular activities, if you happened to be involved in them. As you gathered, I was.

Nathan: And you found this really very absorbing?

Towle: Yes, it was very absorbing, very absorbing. As I have already indicated, America's involvement in World War I did bring us a little closer to outside events. The men were having to do their R.O.T.C. training and all. The girls on the campus, many of us, volunteered to work for the Berkeley Red Cross chapter, and that was across from the campus on what was then Fulton--all of it was Fulton Street. Part of it is Oxford now, but it was all Fulton then, and the Red Cross office, as I recall it, was right across the street there on the corner of Allston and Fulton. Many of us went down there during the day when we had free time, and we'd make bandages or give out yarn to people to make mufflers and socks, or we took yarn ourselves and did knitting at home for the Red Cross. This is the extent, I think, of our activities at that time in the war [laughter], and of course, the United States wasn't involved in it, fortunately, too long.

Then it was during World War I that the University administration--and I think this is interesting--adopted a three term speedup. That's the first time, as far as I know, until recently that the University had done this. Units were evaluated in terms of thirds. You took a course for two terms and that was two-thirds of a unit, and if you took the last part of it, it was the whole unit. I don't happen to have an old transcript of my own record, because it would show on there. I thought I did have one, but heaven knows where it is by this



Towle: time. [Laughter] I didn't bother to get another one. I'm sure Mr. Gilliam would supply me with one, but I haven't asked. It showed on all the early transcripts of my time that this is what had happened.

Nathan: Was there a deferment system then, so that if a young man was in good standing in college, he would then be deferred?

Towle: As I recall it there was. I think that most of the men who got overseas just got as far as England, for instance, and then the war was over and our involvement in it was over and they came back. But yes, there was a deferment plan, I'm sure.

Nathan: So there would have been no other involvement for girls unless they were going to go into nursing or something of that sort?

Towle: Yes. And I don't recall anyone that I knew leaving the University to go into nursing at that particular time. But that doesn't mean that there weren't some later on.

Nathan: Quite a contrast with your own experience in World War II.

Towle: That's right. I thought that might be interesting.

When I was a student, when I first went to the University, Benjamin Ide Wheeler was the President. Until I became a senior, he continued as President. I remember him. You know there are always those stories about him on his white horse riding around the campus. I recall seeing him riding at least once or twice, when I was first on campus. He was a very imposing figure. Of course, we just thought he was wonderful and so romantic looking. [Laughter]

Nathan: Was he a good speaker?

Towle: Yes, an excellent speaker. He had a beautiful command of English, of language.

Nathan: Were you at all aware, at that time, of his theories of building a University, or what he thought was important?



Towle: There, again, I don't think this touched us particularly. We always went whenever [he spoke]. And he spoke often at University convocations or meetings. You remembered him as an excellent speaker, but just what he touched upon, I really don't recall or what his plans for the University were. I know, from reading later on, from my own long association with the University, and its history, what he hoped for for the University.

President Wheeler and Student Government

Nathan: Do you remember whether the students felt they had any particular role to play in the direction that the University should develop? Or, again, were they just partaking of the feast?

Towle: As I recall it, students had a very good student government. I say that because I know that I was a member of what was called the Women's Student Affairs Committee--or something like that. It handled the disciplinary cases of women.

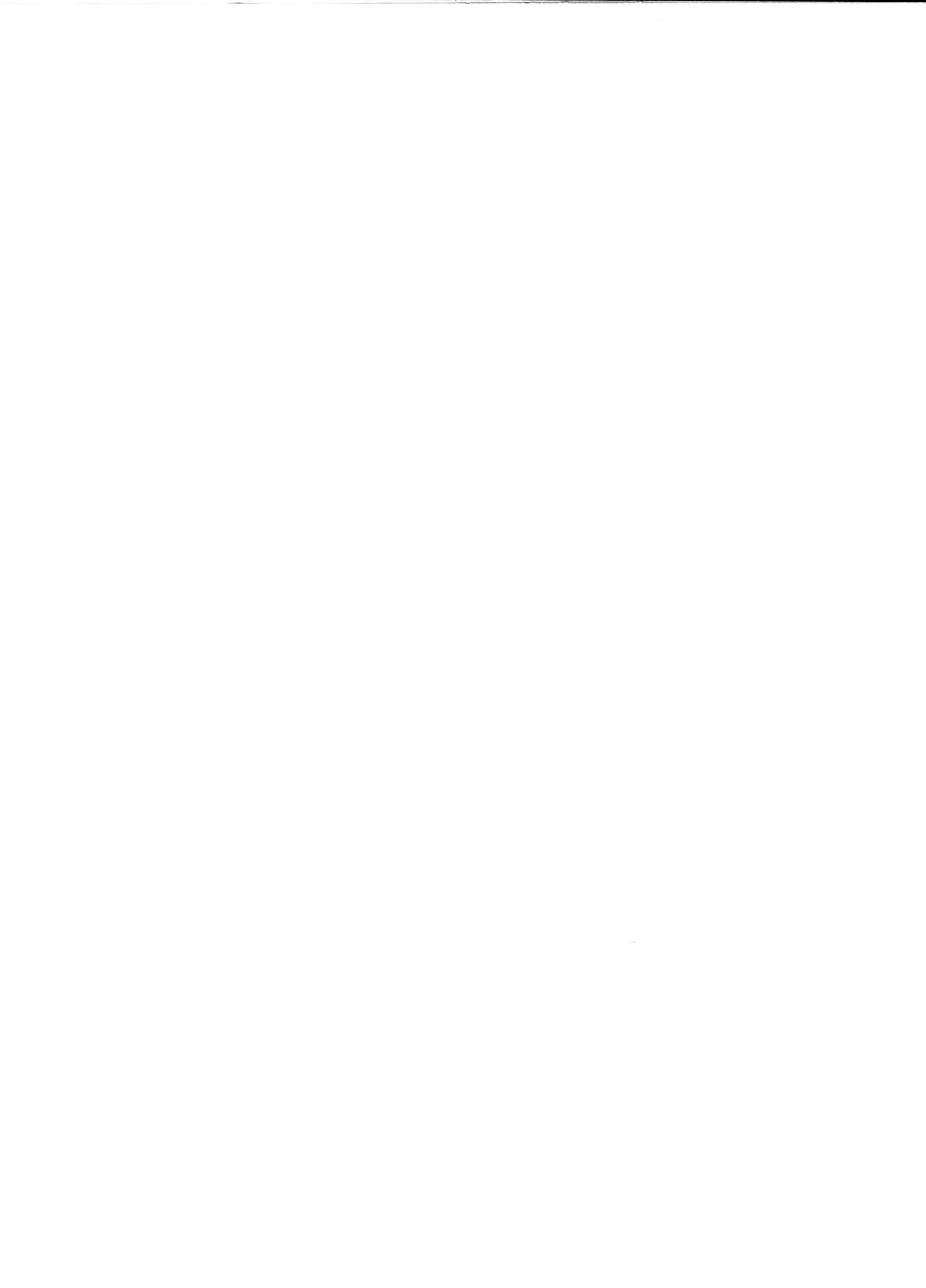
Nathan: Oh, yes. It became Women's Judicial Committee.

Towle: It later became Women's Judicial Committee. Benjamin Ide Wheeler was the one who was instrumental in establishing student government. Of course, this was long before I came to college. Sometimes I feel as if I were the original college student [laughter] but this happened long before I came.

Nathan: I feel that sometimes myself.

Towle: He was very much interested in student government, and student activities, too.

Nathan: As you implied, the students had a great deal to do with their own government and their own activities. Did you have the feeling that students felt they had a role in contributing to the administration's views, or was there a separation between the two?



Towle: There was a definite separation. I don't think the students thought it should be any other way, you know.

Nathan: Yes, this is a very interesting point of view.

Towle: Quite different from these days. I've just finished reading a report, or at least an article, which was sent to me by a friend in New York. Of course, I always read with interest the National Student Association doings. Their convention is on now; I think it's still in progress at College Park, University of Maryland. They've had a long list of resolutions this year. One of them is that they shall be responsible not only in their own government and for their own rules, in every particular, but they shall also have a definite hand and say in the hiring and the firing of faculty and administrators, and all that. I can't imagine students in my day ever having had such thoughts. They never occurred to us.

Nathan: Did they say how they're going to go about this?

Towle: No. I haven't seen that part of it. I've just seen the list of their resolutions.

#### Some Campus Personages

Towle: Among other campus personages that I remember particularly, and famous names on the campus, were Henry Morse Stephens, who was a distinguished historian. He was also a great friend of the students. It was in his honor that they named their first student union. You know, the old student union was named Henry Morse Stephens Hall.

Nathan: Yes. Did you ever have a class with him?

Towle: Yes, I did. I was just going to say that when I was a freshman, he had a lecture course, and we were



Towle: admitted to that. It was a general course in European history. He was a very dynamic speaker. I think it was during that year, and this would have to be verified, but I think it was during that year that he became ill and died. But I was in his class, and he did teach the first part of that class in which I was enrolled as a freshman.

Then there was Professor Charles Mills Gayley. You've probably heard of him, an English professor, and his great books course. We didn't get any credit for a course which was given (anyone could go to this) Friday afternoon at four o'clock in the Greek Theater, and many students went. He was wonderful. When he read Shakespeare, oh, it was just marvelous. Of course, all the ladies of the town used to sit in the front rows of the Greek Theater. They'd go early to get the best seats.  
[Laughter]

Nathan: The Berkeley ladies haven't changed.

Towle: That's right, they haven't changed a bit. But that was one of the things that I recall very vividly. I don't mean to say that I went every Friday, but I went often. Many of us did because we enjoyed so much just hearing Mr. Gayley lecture and read. He would read passages. It was very exciting; he had a deep resonant voice.

Then there were--oh, Dr. Ira B. Cross, who is, I'm glad to say, still going strong. He taught Economics 1A-1B. He also (which was certainly unusual--it would be most unusual for these days) taught a section in Economics 1A. I think it was 1A, it was either 1A or 1B, and I was fortunate enough to be assigned to that section.

Nathan: How did he handle that? Did he get students to talk?

Towle: Yes. He had a roll, and students sat according to it. I remember this very distinctly. You went into class, it was an eight o'clock class as I recall, you went in and you were seated according to the alphabet. I remember once going in--Mr. Cross and I have laughed about this many times--I remember



Towle: I went in once a little late. He was just getting to my name, I think I had counted on it, at least I had hoped this would be so, because I was down in the T's. I got in and I heard this voice booming out, "Miss Towel."

I said, "I'm here, Professor Cross. And it's not Towel, it's Towle."

He said, "I don't care how you pronounce it, it's spelled Towel." [Laughter]

Nathan: That certainly sounds like him.

Towle: He said, "I shall put it in my book with two l's and without the "w" so that I won't mispronounce it again." So that was that. Well, I was never late again. But doesn't that sound like him?

Nathan: It does, exactly.

Towle: He was a wonderful teacher. I appreciate what students mean today when they say that they wish they had closer association with the people who are responsible for the course, the professor in other words. To have had the benefit of not only hearing him lecture but to have been in his section was a very unusual experience. I don't think I thought about it in those terms when I was a student. But since then, and knowing how improbable that would be today, with the numbers of students involved and the time of the members of the faculty, I feel this was one of the great advantages of a smaller campus.

Nathan: Yes. About how many were there in a section?

Towle: I would say that there probably weren't more than twenty five or thirty at the most.

Nathan: And in the lectures?

Towle: In the lectures I don't know. He lectured in Wheeler Auditorium and I recall that the section I was in was upstairs in one of those classrooms. Wheeler Hall, I think, had just been completed, and the great meeting place for all of us was the Wheeler Oak. The Wheeler Oak is now gone, long since gone, but there is a plaque there, I think,



Towle: to commemorate it.

Nathan: There is.

Towle: There used to be. Is it still there?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: It was an enormous oak, a very handsome one. Then I remember--I didn't take a course from Miss Peixotto, Dr. Jessica Peixotto, but I remember seeing her. She was one of the few women on the campus, on the faculty.

Nathan: What sort of impression did she give?

Towle: Oh. Well, now, let me see....How to describe her. She dressed beautifully. She was not very tall, and quite slight, vivacious and always beautifully groomed. She always looked as though she'd just stepped right out of a bandbox. I don't know how old she would have been at the time that I first knew her, but she must have been fairly young.

Nathan: Apparently this was not an easy time for a woman to be on the faculty.

Towle: No, it was not.

Nathan: They were not encouraged to come to faculty meetings?

Towle: No. That's right. She was the first full professor on the campus.

Nathan: I know that she and Lucy Sprague Mitchell were here about the same time. I don't think that Miss Sprague was a full professor.

Towle: No, she wasn't. She was an assistant professor, I believe, of English. At least she became one after she had been here a year or so. But Dr. Peixotto was an outstanding looking person. You always noticed her. I remember her so well, just seeing her, always thinking how wonderful she looked. Miss Stebbins was another one, you know. The two of them were good friends; both fine looking; quite impressive really.



Towle: Then I remember Dr. Deutsch. I was to know Dr. [Monroe] Deutsch later on very well. He was on the campus, a professor of Latin. Later, of course, he became vice-president and provost during President Sproul's regime.

Then there was David Prescott Barrows, professor of political science. He was well remembered by many of us. He was handsome, very handsome, well-built, very straight, with a military bearing always--debonaire in a kind of austere way, very imposing looking.

He became President of the University in 1919, and my class was his first graduating class. My diploma is signed by David Prescott Barrows, my A.B. When I returned, some fifteen years later, to the University, to work towards my master's degree in political science, I enrolled in one of Professor Barrows' seminars. I can remember so well--it was an evening seminar--and it was always enlivened by Mr. Barrows' simply marvelous tales about his own reminiscences and his experiences, at home and abroad. He had traveled a great deal. He was very vivacious; a man interested in many facets.

Nathan: Was it to the point of the discussion?

Towle: I was going to say, it wasn't always to the point of the discussion, but it didn't matter. It left you with something, and you enjoyed it.

Nathan: Was it partly through his stimulation that you were interested in political science?

Towle: No. I didn't know Professor Barrows personally at that time. I changed my major for personal reasons, in my senior year, and decided not to go into law because I didn't think I wanted at that point to take such a long course. A year or so later my plans were abruptly changed. I had liked the political science courses that I had taken. I talked it over, I remember, with Professor Philbrick who was a wonderful man in the School of Law. I told him I thought I would withdraw from law because I felt it was going to be a longer course, and I would not be using it, probably. I didn't want to



Towle: take the time to do all the extra work you have to do to pass the bar examinations and so on. I decided to change my major in my senior year, and I wanted to work the courses that I had into the best possible major. I remember his saying something to this effect, "If you're at all interested in either history or political science, these are naturals. In your case you might very well be interested in political science. I think you'd find that you have a flair for it and you would enjoy it." That was more or less the way it happened.

I don't remember too much about the political science department as an undergraduate. I do recall a young professor, Roy Douglas; I found him extremely interesting, and helpful at the time I was thinking of changing my major. He died not too many years after that. He was a very fine young man. Even I thought he was young, so he must have been young.  
[Laughter]

Nathan: This business of having to fit your courses into the major is very familiar.

Towle: Yes. But I've always been glad I decided on political science. American government interested me especially. This is one reason that I did my master's thesis in American government.

Nathan: "The Exercise of the Presidential Veto since 1889"?

Towle: Yes. I enjoyed it, and as I think I told you earlier, I really liked to study and I was a good student. I never found it difficult to get my work done. I was one of those rare human beings, I think, who will admit to having rather enjoyed taking final examinations.

Nathan: Now how did this come about?

Towle: I don't know. I think one reason is--you know it's kind of smart to say you can't bear to take examinations. But if you really keep up in your work and you enjoy what you're doing, there's something kind of stimulating about reviewing the whole thing and then being able to put it together. Well,



Towle: it's a gamble, to be sure, what you're going to be asked, but it's interesting and it's kind of a challenge to come up with the right answers.

Nathan: So you took it as a challenge?

Towle: I doubt if I thought of it as such, but I never minded final examination time.

Nathan: You liked to be in command of the material.

Towle: I liked to be in command of the material and always expected myself to be when I went to an examination, because I would study hard. I studied by myself for the most part. I didn't do any of this group business that is done so much today. I found that you can get diverted awfully easily. I don't think there was a tendency quite so much then to do this kind of seminar studying. This may be a very good thing, I don't know. It just didn't happen to be the way I studied.

Nathan: This discipline in keeping up and then reviewing to have a complete grasp of the material, is this more or less your method in dealing with problems in your professional life?

Towle: I think, actually, this has been somewhat the case. I don't know that I'm a good example of it now because I feel I've sort of fallen apart the last two or three years as far as that kind of organization is concerned. I haven't had to do it, for one thing. But, that's true. I mean I couldn't have done nearly as much if I hadn't. That's the way my mind works, really. Just as in this kind of thing, that is why it's easier for me to put things down and then work on them and then see them as a whole. For years I wouldn't admit that I liked to take finals, because that was supposed to be infra dig--you just weren't with it if you said that. [Laughter]

Nathan: You're absolutely right about that.

Towle: So it was a long time before I would admit it to anybody.

Nathan: It's nice to be free.



Towle: Oh, that's right. There are great advantages to being old, and free to say what you want.

There were many other interesting personages on campus in the early days. I didn't have as much personal knowledge of some of them as I did of others, but one person whom I greatly admired and liked tremendously and enjoyed working for was Mr. James Sutton, who was the Recorder. It was called Recorder then, Recorder of the Faculties, rather than Registrar, as it is now. He was a most interesting and scholarly man. He had a lifelong interest in philosophy. He was not married. He pursued his scholarly interests outside of his University responsibilities. He was very much respected on the campus, very much liked. He had many, many friends among the faculty. He was one of the old-timers on the campus. He graduated from the University in 1878 or something like that. And stayed until his death.

Nathan: What sort of work did you do with him?

Towle: We'll come to that. I thought I'd mention some of these other people and get them in some kind of order. There was Professor Edmund O'Neill, dean of the College of Chemistry, known to his friends as "Eddie" O'Neill. He was around the campus and we all knew who he was. I didn't know him personally but he was one of the really renowned persons on campus. Then there was Charles Noble, professor of mathematics. And also another mathematics professor, Mellen Haskell. And I think George Louderback was in this group. I'm not absolutely certain whether he was a little later or not, but I knew him for many years. I think he was one of these early members, but I could be wrong there. Then there was Professor Eugen Neuhaus.

Nathan: He must have been quite young.

Towle: Oh, he was, he was quite a young sprout. He and I over the years became quite good friends. He was an interesting man. Quite a character in lots of ways. Actually, I didn't know him personally until much later. According to his book, Drawn from Memory, he came to the University in 1908, though



Towle: there was no formal art department until 1920. As a matter of fact, this book gives an interesting picture of the early days.

I see his widow once in awhile. She's here in Berkeley. She hopes to make a photographic compilation of all of his paintings. I have four. I don't know how many there are. Many, of course, are owned privately. I'm not sure that Mrs. Neuhaus knows where all of them are.

Nathan: I gather you didn't take art courses.

Towle: No, I didn't, but I always have had a certain interest in art. When I came back to the University in 1953, Professor Neuhaus had a studio in the top of California Hall and I used to climb up there occasionally and look at his paintings. He was an entertaining man; rather dramatic, with a rather Teutonic approach to things. He and President Wheeler had been friends. He had a very good sense of humor, and was very amusing about many things. After I became Dean of Women he used to drop by my office in Sproul Hall to see me. He was retired by that time. We had a good time gossiping about campus affairs. He'd tell me about any little tidbits that he'd picked up at the Men's Faculty Club. [Laughter] He was a good friend of mine.

I remember Thomas Putnam, Dean Thomas Putnam, Dean of Undergraduates and also professor of mathematics. He was Dean of Undergraduates when Miss Stebbins was Dean of Women. And it just happened that the Putnams lived right back of my family. Our rear gardens were adjacent. At home I used to see the Putnams quite often.

#### Deans of Women at Berkeley

Then, of course, I suppose most of all I recall, with the greatest admiration and affection Lucy Ward Stebbins, who was the Dean of Women at Berkeley for twenty-eight years.



Nathan: Did you know her when you were an undergraduate?

Towle: Yes. She, of all the persons whom I knew and respected, had the most profound effect on my own life, really.

Nathan: How was this?

Towle: It was because of her, for one thing, that I determined many years ago that I wanted to be a Dean of Women. To many women students she was an ideal. Now many students were scared of her, frightened of her. She did look a little austere. But she wasn't really. She had quite a shyness in a sense. She was tall and she had a very commanding presence. I knew her when I was an undergraduate primarily because of my activities in student affairs.

In later years we became very warm personal friends, on a first name basis for many, many years. But I never really lost that sense that I had of her as an undergraduate, of being in the presence of someone special. I always had that feeling about her. She must've been a very young woman when I came to the University in 1916 because as I recall Lucy Sprague left in 1912, so Miss Stebbins couldn't have been Dean of Women any longer than four years, if that.

Nathan: 1911 was Lucy Sprague's last full year on campus.

Towle: Then Miss Stebbins certainly hadn't been Dean of Women more than four or five years, at the most, when I came to college. In any event she certainly left her mark on the University, and especially on the women students, as few women have done.

Nathan: Did you have the impression that she was interested in intellectual development?

Towle: Yes. Yes, she was, definitely. She was a very reserved person. But, as I say, I think part of that was an innate shyness, too. She was tall and very handsome.

Nathan: What color was her hair? I only knew her after it was white.



Towle: It was brown. She had rather a dark skin.

Nathan: Olive?

Towle: Yes, olive. Big, very searching, too, they could be, brown eyes. Slender. She was not small, but she was slender. She was tall. She, like Jessica Peixotto, dressed beautifully. She was beautifully groomed, all her life. Great pride and care of herself. You remember things like that, too. This was not a superficial thing. You just felt this was all part of her.

The Dean of Women's office at that time was in the north-east corner, on the second floor of California Hall, which was then the administration building.

Nathan: Oh, yes. You went toiling up the stairs.

Towle: Oh, yes indeed. If you wanted to go to the Dean of Undergraduates office you went the other way. But you went to the right if you were going to the Dean of Women's office. It was the kind of place where many of us, especially those of us who were active in student affairs, went quite often. We didn't presume to see Miss Stebbins every time. We always saw Mrs. Davidson, or practically always saw Mrs. Davidson. Her door was always open and she was always there to discuss anything we were interested in. She, too, was a very gracious person. You didn't interview her, did you?

Nathan: Mrs. Davidson, yes.

Towle: Then you know what sort of a person she is.

Nathan: Yes. I knew her as an undergraduate.

Towle: She must have been Dean of Women.

Nathan: Yes, she was, in '41, yes. There was the impression of a sort of cordiality in the dean's office.

Towle: Yes, there was. It was a small office. I think they only had two assistants, something like that. But the office was arranged: you went in--Miss



Towle: Stebbins had an office over in the corner, you didn't see her of course. She was off by herself, and her door opened out into the hallway. Then she moved, later, into another office, but it was at the other end. But it was always the middle part of the office where Mrs. Davidson sat. That was always all sort of glass, you could always see in there. Then the girls, the two assistants, sat outside. I think Mrs. Davidson always kept that office, but I think Miss Beattie--Margaret Beattie--was for a time in Miss Stebbins' office. She had another little office--somehow they made another little office at the end of this grouping of small offices. But Mrs. Davidson was always there. She was out and about, too. Used to see her at a great many things.

Nathan: Yes, apparently she went to meetings, meetings, day and night.

Towle: Yes. So we were always assured of a friendly welcome from Mrs. Davidson. She never seemed to be too busy to give us of her time. She, too became a good personal friend of mine, whom I admire and respect.

Nathan: This sort of feeling that the Dean of Women was with you instead of against you I think was a very pleasant thing all together.

Towle: That's right. It was and it meant a great deal to the students. When I became Dean of Women myself this was one of the things that I tried to continue. In a very different campus situation I tried to have the same kind of rapport between the students and myself. I think I succeeded in very large part.

Nathan: So you really took some clues from both Miss Stebbins and Mrs. Davidson?

Towle: Yes, I did.

Nathan: Of course, this was rather a part of your own nature by this time.

Towle: Well, yes. And then, of course, my experience at Miss Ransom and Miss Bridges School had helped, too. You see, all of my adult life I've dealt with young



Towle: people one way or another with the exception of the really very brief period at the University Press where I was not directly involved with young people. But otherwise I've always been.

Nathan: I don't want to go into the Ransom School now, but I do want to remember to ask you about it.

Towle: You can come back to it.

We were talking about Mrs. Davidson and the old California Halls days, weren't we?

Nathan: Yes. And you were saying that Margaret Beattie sometimes worked there.

Towle: Yes. She was there, but this was later. She was not there during my time, of course. This was years later, but later on she did become part of the Dean of Women's office. Margaret Beattie was many years later. I had long since departed from the University.

(Looking at clipping of Lucy Sprague Mitchell's death on October 15, 1967) I was just thinking how fortunate that that interview with her was done.

Nathan: That interview of Lucy Sprague Mitchell was done by Irene Prescott at least five or six years ago.

Towle: I am going to put this clipping in my copy of Two Lives. [Book by Lucy S. Mitchell] She was quite a gal, really.

Nathan: You know, the thing that struck me, too, was the continuity of it, and how few deans of women there had been on this campus.

Towle: Yes. I was the fourth.

Nathan: Yes, after Mrs. Davidson and Miss Stebbins.

Towle: Lucy Sprague first, then Lucy Stebbins; then Mary Davidson and myself. Betty Neely, the present dean, is the fifth. Since Miss Stebbins was dean for twenty-eight years, she covered quite a span from 1912 until 1941 when she retired. That's a long time.



Towle: I shall always be grateful to Mrs. Davidson for many things. But I think one of the things that makes me especially so, was that she recommended to Provost Deutsch that I become a member of her staff when I returned the first time, after my military service. I actually went to her office in 1947 after a very brief year in Dr. Deutsch's office as senior administrative assistant.

Mrs. Davidson's Recommendation to the Marine Corps

Nathan: Yes. She recounts how she had her eye on you.  
[Laughter]

Towle: I might also say that Mrs. Davidson was the one who told the Marine Corps that I might be interested. A representative of the Marine Corps from Washington came to her, about the time the Marine Corps Women's Reserve was being formed. The Commandant of the Marine Corps sent representatives out to different parts of the country. Major Brewster Rhoads, who was sent to the University of California, quite properly went to the Dean of Women--Mrs. Davidson-- and asked her if she had any suggestions. He told her the sort of person they wanted. They were trying to get seven women--six women, actually--from different parts of the country. They already had selected the director, but they wanted six women from different parts of the country who could be commissioned directly from civilian life as captains. So they wanted to have someone with some experience, some knowledge, but you didn't have to have any military experience, obviously. No woman could have had. They just wanted to have somebody whom the Dean of Women, for instance, felt was a responsible and desirable person, somebody she knew.

Mrs. Davidson suggested my name. She called me and asked me if I would be interested and I said I didn't know because I didn't know anything about military service. But, of course, I had thought at



Towle: that time of going into one of the services. I had thought really of the WAVES because I wanted to do something for the country in war time, and I was footloose and free to do it. I had not heard of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve being started. I've always been grateful to Mrs. Davidson for telling the Marine Corps about me.

Nathan: Who was the first person designated as the director?

Towle: She was Mrs. T.W. Streeter, Ruth Cheney Streeter. This is a picture of her, right there [on the desk], from Morristown, New Jersey. She was made director of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve in 1943. We started in February, 1943. Then, you see, there were these others who were selected--but I'll get into that later when we get to the Marine Corps stage of my life.

Nathan: Right. So, anyway, Mrs. Davidson had her eye on you.

Towle: That's right. We've been, as I say, very good close personal friends every since. I'm very fond of her. I think she is in many ways a remarkable woman. She has been in such delicate health for so many years and yet she's got all the spunk in the world. Marvelous, really, and she keeps up her interest in things.

Nathan: Very much so. And that charm has not deteriorated one bit.

Towle: No, it has not a bit. Those big blue eyes look at you. [Laughter] She and Miss Stebbins made an excellent team, really.

Nathan: Yes, now that I think of it, they must have.

Towle: They really did.

' There had been this interim period when there had not been a Dean of Women, the period between Mrs. Davidson's retirement in '51 and when I came in '53. The work had been carried on by others in the office, notably Catharine Quire and Alice Hoyt. I was very proud to be selected her successor upon



Towle: my retirement from the Marine Corps in 1953. Both she and Miss Stebbins helped me enormously. My having known them, and not only having known them in the past, but when I came back to Berkeley, they both helped me in many ways.

Nathan: That continuity is very valuable.

Towle: Yes, and it meant a great deal to me to have them right at hand, so I could avail myself of discussing things with them when I felt the need for it.

#### More Campus People and Places

Nathan: I find this all fascinating. There are three names more I wanted to mention.

Towle: Yes. Toss them back to me.

Nathan: Leuschner, Wells, and Hart.

Towle: Oh, yes. First, Professor Armin Leuschner. He was another one I should have mentioned as being someone I remember very well on the campus--I didn't take astronomy and I didn't have any particular connection with him besides knowing his daughter, Erida. He was dean of the Graduate Division for many years while I was in college, but not while I was a graduate student. I think Charles Lipman was dean of the Graduate Division when I came back to get my master's degree in '35. But he was one of the outstanding members of the faculty in those days. I was interested to learn from reading Professor Hildebrand's account of his association with Professor Leuschner, how much he contributed to the faculty and their faculty councils. I hadn't known this, and was very much interested in his comments about Mr. Leuschner. And, of course, there is Professor (Joel) Hildebrand himself--one of the University's greats.



Towle: Then Chauncey Wells! I'm so glad you brought him up. He and Mrs. Wells were a charming couple. Their home and the Walter Morris Hart home were where the International House is now. That was the most beautiful place in there. The Walter Morris Hart home was on the corner of Bancroft and Piedmont. Then you went in, sort of to one side, at the north on Piedmont Avenue, you went into a--well, it was like going into a great big garden of sorts. Then there were two or three houses off of that; the Wellses lived in one of them. I've forgotten who else. Then beyond that, where the stadium is now, was the home of the Anson Blakes. After it was decided to build the stadium there, they moved out to Rincon Road in El Cerrito.

Nathan: Is that Blake House?

Towle: That's Blake House. Mrs. Blake upon her death--Mr. Blake had already died--upon her death bequeathed it to the University. They had a handsome house and beautiful gardens. Mr. Blake and Mrs. Blake, and Mrs. Blake's sister, Miss Symmes, who lived with them, was a landscape gardener. They knew a tremendous amount about plants. They had all sorts of rare plants, even at the place on Piedmont Avenue, and then they moved way out to Rincon Road to be certain I guess that the University would not take this property, too. [Laughter] But that was a very beautiful part of Berkeley and the homes along Piedmont Avenue then were lovely. The Chauncey Wellses were there and across the way was the old Day home. Mr. Day, I think, had been an early professor at Berkeley--Clinton Day. I really don't remember him. Just below them, on the corner where Boalt Hall now is was Professor Wickson's home. Across the street was the Hilgard home, on Bancroft, where the Zeta Psi House is now, the new Zeta house.

Nathan: Was Chauncey Wells in the English department?

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: And Hart?



Towle: Walter Morris Hart was in English. Oh, yes, these men are very important.

Nathan: Now, was this the Hart who was at one time...?

Towle: Vice-president, when William Wallace Campbell was President.

Nathan: He was vice-president. Was he in the running for the presidency of the University ever?

Towle: Yes he was.

Nathan: Did the students wander around up in that area much, or was it all private?

Towle: They were private homes. I don't recall that the students did as much wandering around the residential areas as they do now, but then there were fewer students and practically no apartment buildings. Berkeley was really a residential city in those days--lots of trees and very beautiful.

Oh, then there was Professor Charles Rieber: We must mention Professor Rieber! I had Logic with him. When the stadium was built, he was most unhappy because his home which had been in a lonely, more or less remote location, looked right down into the stadium. He and his wife, who was an artist, finally couldn't stand what had happened. He asked to be transferred to UCLA and they moved there. He was a professor there for many years.

Nathan: So, really these faculty members were living on University land, were they?

Towle: No. At least I'm sure a great deal of it was privately owned. The University bought the land for the stadium from private sources. If they had not sold, their property could have been condemned I suppose. You know, by eminent domain.

Nathan: I was wondering about the time when the Rockefeller grant came through.

Towle: The Rockefeller grant....Well, now, let's see. International House was built in 1930.



Nathan: But this came through while people were in residence in the area.

Towle: That's right.

Nathan: It is a superb location.

### The Old Berkeley Feeling

Towle: Oh, yes. It is. I don't know that there was any special feeling on the part of a lot of residents, though they couldn't have been very happy. This was inevitable, and they were all interested in the University. You know, this is the thing, I think, that you feel--especially I do, having been around such a long time. People had a real feeling about the University--I'm talking now of the faculty as well as the students--and you had a feeling that the University was a part of you, and you sold your property if the University felt they needed it because this was important to the University to have the property. But you didn't mind doing it so much because it was going presumably to enhance the University. I think there is quite a different feeling today. In those days it was kind of like--well, everybody was a part of the family, as it were. This was bound to be, because it was smaller, and so many of the faculty had been here so long. I think this feeling--I don't know how to define it, exactly--it's hard to put it into words, but there was a personal feeling about the University that I think one doesn't have now simply because he can't have it, really. There are just too many people involved. Some old-timers still feel, I'm sure, that same way, but there's not the same strong feeling of personal ties. I think this is one of the things that actually came out, to some degree, in 1954-65.

Nathan: A lack of personal ties?



Towle: Yes.

Nathan: So much of this system consists in going up the academic ladder at different places.

Towle: Yes, that's right.

Nathan: Then you wait for the best offer.

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: It may be that not so many people come and stay.

Towle: I have no way of knowing, but this would be my impression as I look back on it. Those people had been here for so long, and Berkeley was an entirely different kind of place; Berkeley was a college town. Now this is important. It was not only the University that was important to all of the residents of Berkeley, but they were important to the University and it was a community, a real community. You went downtown and the main street of Berkeley was just like a village, and you knew practically everybody. Of course, the war changed that, World War II, in large part, and then, too, the Berkeley fire in 1923, which burned so much of north Berkeley. It didn't touch the south, this part so much. In fact, the fire didn't come down here at all, but it came right to the north edge of the campus, on Hearst, practically. It skipped, jumped; it was strange because it was such an odd day. It was terribly hot, dry, and windy.

Nathan: Was it in the summer?

Towle: September. September 19 or 18, I've forgotten the exact day; I know it was September and it was in '23. But after the Berkeley fire when all those nice old redwood and shingle homes were burned, then apartments popped up, everything became apartments in that area. Now this might have been inevitable anyway, but I think maybe it would have happened a little differently if there had been more time to plan things. I don't think the north part of Berkeley, until you get out farther, is particularly attractive now. There are a few nice buildings, yes.



Nathan: But the fire really was the turning point.

Towle: Yes, I think it was. I think it had a lot to do with it.

Nathan: I've heard it said that in Seattle people feel this way about the University of Washington still, that there's a very personal attachment to it.

Towle: Well, you see, the University of Washington is out in a community kind of away from the center of town, and I think this probably carries over even now. Washington isn't as large or as complicated as it is here, so that could very well be.

Nathan: This is interesting, that you have seen the two different poles of development, and known so many faculty members.

Towle: Yes, and it's interesting to me to recall them. I have mentioned the Hilgards and the Wicksons. They were real old-timers. There were many, many others, too. Their names elude me now. I may think of them and maybe we'll put them in along with the others as time goes along.

The Daily Californian, The Dill Pickle, and the Raspberry

Nathan: When you were on the Daily Californian did you do interviews?

Towle: Yes, I interviewed some of these people. I don't remember just exactly who--oh, yes, I used to run all over the campus. I started as a cub reporter.

Nathan: Right, as a freshman.

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: Then you stayed.



Towle: Yes, I stayed. We had a woman's editor then, and Bernice Hubbard May, Berkeley councilman now--she was Bernice Hubbard then--was woman's editor. I've known Bernice forever. She and her family lived right around the corner from my family in the Elmwood district. Bernice was ahead of me two years. She graduated in the class of 1918. In her senior year she was woman's editor of the Daily Californian. I can't remember who the former woman's editor had been. There were two or three of us considered for woman's editor my senior year, who were on the staff, but I was not selected. A classmate, Arlene Verue, was. This didn't break my heart. It was one of those things.

Nathan: It was wildly competitive.

Towle: Oh, very competitive. I enjoyed it anyway. It didn't make any difference.

Nathan: Oh, no. What you learn there you certainly won't forget.

Towle: That's right. Then we had that funny little office.

Nathan: Where was it?

Towle: It was in the basement of North Hall. [Laughter] In the basement of North Hall and there were about two typewriters, and everybody was always fighting over who got the typewriters. You had to be awfully agile or you'd find yourself without a chance to type.

Nathan: There was very much the business of working your way up from one year to the next.

Towle: That's right. You worked your way up.

Nathan: Did they have the beat system?

Towle: Yes, yes, we did have the beat system.

Nathan: And you were sort of supervised along the way by older staff members.

Towle: Yes.



Nathan: In this way I imagine you learned a lot about Cal.

Towle: I learned a lot about the campus. I do know it probably more than many others who haven't had this kind of experience. I enjoyed the Daily Californian very much, as shown by the fact that I stayed with it for the three years. I didn't have to but I enjoyed it.

Nathan: Then did you go down to the print shop?

Towle: Put the paper to bed? Certainly, and I was editor of that scurrilous rag the Dill Pickle, the green press. You know, you asked me about that. I was editor; I've forgotten what year that was; I was selected by my pals to be the editor.

Nathan: I see. Now the Dill Pickle wasn't actually forbidden in the way the Raspberry was?

Towle: No, it wasn't. The Raspberry wasn't forbidden at first.

Nathan: Oh, was it not?

Towle: No, I think not. It deteriorated, as I remember. The Raspberry started as one of these things that take people on and have fun. It was really very entertaining when it first started. It was, as you know, printed in red ink. We copied them, really, the Dill Pickle. We just decided we'd have to do something because they wouldn't let the women work on the thing.

Nathan: Oh, the Dill Pickle was just the girls.

Towle: Just the girls. We got out our own paper called the Dill Pickle. The Raspberry Press, a great part of it, was given to putting the women in their place, the college women, especially the so-called campus leaders, and so forth. We decided we'd take on the men. So we got together and the Dill Pickle was the result.

Nathan: Was that printed in the same place as the Daily Cal?

Towle: I think it was printed there. And we sold it. The copies that we sold were what paid for the thing.



Nathan: How much did you sell it for?

Towle: I don't know. I think it was ten cents, but ten cents was ten cents in those days.

Nathan: It was printed in green ink or on green paper?

Towle: It was printed in green ink on very cheap newspaper. And it was, as I recall, just a four-page thing.

Nathan: Was this your junior year that you did this?

Towle: Yes, I think this was my junior year. I'm not sure whether it was my junior year or my senior, but I think it was my junior year.

Nathan: Did that come out in the spring, near the end of the year?

Towle: Yes. We waited until after the Raspberry Press came out. Then the women had the last word. [Laughter]

Nathan: What a pity that didn't continue.

Towle: I don't know how long it lasted, actually. I think it lasted a few years. It may have gone into the very early twenties, but it didn't last too long after that.

Nathan: Had it started long before you?

Towle: No, no. I'm not awfully sure that we didn't start it. Or it may have been just the year before. It was in my time, anyway. All this is awfully hazy.

Nathan: References to this appear and disappear and it's hard to trace. I'm delighted to find someone who participated in it.

Towle: I don't like to say it was started in my time when I'm not sure. I know that I was the editor of it one time. I don't think we started it at that particular point, but it hadn't been going on for very long.

Nathan: About how large a staff did you have?



Towle: Oh, I don't know. I think there must've been eight or ten of us involved. We used to have fun. We had to get it out in a hurry.

Nathan: And you used actual names?

Towle: We twisted them. The Raspberry Press did too. You didn't say Katherine Towle, you'd say Crash Towel, or something like that. The person reading would know perfectly well who you meant, but you didn't say. Oh, we twisted names all around.

Nathan: Did you include faculty members, or was it mostly students?

Towle: It was mostly students, as I recall. We may have taken on a faculty member or two, but it was mostly students and things that were happening on the campus.

Nathan: Now does Istyc have anything to do with this?

Towle: Now, you told me that you thought it did. As I told you, I have no idea what that was. I think you were the one that gave me the clue to this.

Nathan: What was it you mentioned when you appeared at the first University meeting, when you returned to the campus?

Towle: When I came back to be Dean of Women in '53, Chancellor Kerr asked me if I would speak at the first University meeting in the Greek Theater, and I said that I would be very happy to. He introduced me, of course, telling a little about my campus activities, I think also trying to allay any fears that I was going to be the big (here's this woman just from the Marines)--that after all I was a regular guy from the University of California itself. So he gave a long list of things I had done as an undergraduate. He mentioned the organizations, the student organizations to which I had belonged like Prytanean and Torch and Shield and all of those. Then he mentioned this Istyc and I practically fell off the stage. I just looked at him and my mouth opened. And I said afterward, "Where did you ever get that?"



Towle: He said, "Whoever was looking up the material for me in your undergraduate days found this listed in the Blue and Gold."

Nathan: That's it, that's exactly where it came from.

Towle: Well, I just don't know what it was. It's gone right out of my memory.

Nathan: The only other clue I can give you is that it is listed somewhere as the Mystic Istyc. So it may have been some little secret group, spoofy.

Towle: It may have been. It sounds spoofy, all right. Of course, everybody just howled at this, including myself, but I just haven't the foggiest idea what it was. I must ask some of my classmates, there are one or two around here, who might know, if I remember when I see them. I'll ask if they remember what Istyc was, because I think it is just too amusing that I can't remember.

Nathan: What is Alpha Pi Zeta? Is that the honorary society?

Towle: That was the political science honorary society. I was taken into that as a senior, I think.

And the Freshie Glee. I didn't even remember that I sang in the Freshie Glee. I don't think I did. Did I?

### Parthenia

Nathan: Some of these I simply listed. I don't have a note that you were in the Freshie Glee, either.

Towle: I don't think so. Parthenia, yes.

Nathan: Were you in it?



Towle: Oh, I was in a Parthenia. I was Diana of the Chase, and I wore a leopard skin thrown over the shoulders and carried a bow and arrow, I'll have you know. It was a walk-on part. [Laughter]

Nathan: Barefoot?

Towle: Of course. In Faculty Glade.

Nathan: It sounds very hippy indeed.

Towle: Yes. I know it does. And I remember Erida Leuschner, Professor Leuschner's daughter, in the same one, she came in on a horse. I don't know what she was supposed to represent. I've forgotten the name of our Parthenia.

Nathan: I'm sure it had all kinds of symbolism in it.

Towle: I'm sure it did, too. But really they were beautiful. There's no question about it, they were beautiful performances and they did bring the women students together. I had charge of the costuming in one of them. By that, I mean seeing that people got the right costumes and got them all back, and got them into the costume boxes and so forth. The only part I ever had was this walk-on part in this leopard skin or whatever it was. I thought that was just wonderful.

Nathan: It is a great way to get acquainted with a lot of people, when you're rehearsing.

Towle: Yes. This was it. This was one reason why I had so many friends on the campus, because I was in all of these things. And the campus was relatively small in those days and you got to know people this way. I think Miss Sprague's idea when she started the Parthenia was for that very reason, to bring women students together in something that was worthwhile and in which many could participate. This was exactly what happened, of course. In a way it's too bad--there again it petered out simply because there were too many other things that were distracting and too many other things happened for students to do.

Nathan: Could anyone who wanted to participate be a part of it?



Towle: Yes. You had to try out for the main parts as I recall it, but you could certainly carry a bow and arrow and walk across the stage, as I did, without having any great talent, or any tryouts or anything of that sort. They just asked if you'd like to take part in it.

Nathan: Do you remember who directed it?

Towle: No, I don't. That's all very hazy.

Nathan: I do have some names of people who were involved.

Towle: I should remember this Parthenia in which I was very slightly involved, but I just don't remember the name of it.

Nathan: And did people come and sit all around the glade?

Towle: There were many more oaks in Faculty Glade at that time, so you could do much more in the way of having backdrops with your stage. You were not out in the open quite so much as you would be now if you were having it. You could use trees--people popped out from behind trees, and that sort of thing. Now they'd have to have something to--well, I don't know how to express it exactly.

Nathan: You'd need almost a formal stage.

Towle: Yes, you would need one, because the trees have gone. There are still some beautiful oaks there. But anyone who didn't see Faculty Glade in the early days has no idea how beautiful it was with all the many, many oak trees, which of course have since died, as oak trees unfortunately do, especially if they're over lawns, which have to have so much water that kills the oaks. But this was all down there in Faculty Glade. I was trying to think what time of day they usually were. I think they were in the afternoon.

Nathan: Was it given just once?

Towle: I think it was given just once.

Nathan: Did people pay admission?



Towle: This I'm not sure of, but we had great crowds. I think they must have, because I remember people came from all over. It was a great event, really. That was a very interesting thing on the campus. I think Miss Sprague had great foresight in doing that, especially at the time she did. Remembering, and reading her own statements about it in Two Lives, I think she mentions it in that, too.

Nathan: Yes, she does.

Towle: It was to bring the women students into something that was worthwhile and give them a feeling of being a part of the University.

### Labor Day

Nathan: I take it, then, that Labor Day was really something that the men did.

Towle: Labor Day was something else. Every four years, Leap Year (isn't that every four years?) on that extra day of leap year, that was declared Labor Day. It came once in each college generation, you see. I was put in charge, I don't know by whom (a committee, I suppose) of the feeding of all of these people.

I'll tell you what they did. They'd go up and clear the trails, you know, they'd keep up the Big C trail up on the hill. They would make new trails and mend the old trails and do all sorts of things in connection with Big C. A lot of the trails that were built up there on the hills--of course those hills, too, had many more trees on them than they have now--were done in large part by the men themselves. Oh, the University maintenance people kept them up, of course, in between times. But a lot of it was started on Labor Day. You were supposed to turn out and do your share. This was started early in the morning, about eight o'clock or so. And then



Towle: at noon this great horde came down to the old Hearst Gymnasium, there on the corner of College and Bancroft, where you had this great bean feed. We didn't have hamburgers in those days. We had hot dogs. I never shall forget. I've never seen so much mustard in my life. Never! My family were simply horrified because I had to bring home a lot of stuff and store it there prior to its use. I couldn't find any place else to put a lot of it. They were perfectly agreeable. By this time they were used to almost anything. I can remember the can openers, and my father saying to me, "What are you going to do with all those can openers!" They were to open cans of cider, or cans of something or other we had. We had a large committee, but I was in charge of all of this. I, who can't stand to cook! I think it's just killing. We had cooks there. I don't know where they came from, undoubtedly provided by the University. Then I had to see that everything was cleaned up and get it back to its proper place. Now, this must have been, let's see, it was 1920.

Nathan: It's divisible by four, yes. It must've been.

Towle: It was my senior year, that's right.

Nathan: And there you were with all that mustard.

Towle: Those gallon jars! I really have never seen so much mustard! It was amazing that it all seemed to go. And buns! Thousands of buns. Surrounded by buns.

Nathan: You were feeding literally hundreds of people.

Towle: Yes. Because the men all turned out for this. If they didn't stay all day up on the hill, they all came for lunch. [Laughter] It was fun. We had a great time.

Nathan: Paper plates and that kind of thing?

Towle: Oh, yes, oh, yes. The University turned over its facilities to us and they also gave us a clean-up crew. We did as much as we could, that we were responsible for. It was a University day, kind of,



Towle: and it was a holiday. It was Labor Day. I don't know when this started. This must've started quite a long time before my time.

Nathan: Did you have the feeling that most of the people on campus responded and got involved?

Towle: Yes. I did, but I could be wrong. You get so involved yourself, with people you know, that you have a tendency to think that everybody's involved, and this possibly was not so. But anyway, we had Labor Day in my time. I don't know how long that continued after my graduation.

Of course, I believe these so-called traditions should be given up the minute they have ceased to mean something. I think there's nothing worse than trying to hang on to an old tradition that has outworn its time. Students used to ask me about something that had been done years and years before. They'd say, "This is sort of a tradition, isn't it?"

I'd say, "It may be a tradition, but unless you think it's really something you want to follow, pay no attention. You'll start another tradition of your own. This is what is important about student generations. You don't have to go along, just doing what somebody else did fifty years ago." I don't know how long that Labor Day business was. But it was part of my senior year, and it was interesting to have had a part in it.

Nathan: Did it interfere with your studies, or did you manage to do both?

Towle: Oh, I managed to do all right.

Nathan: Was there much discussion, when you were an undergraduate, about problems of residence, residence halls around the University?

Towle: There was no discussion of residence halls that I recall. It was one of those things that we never heard discussed. The University policy, I would say, was almost against residence halls.

Nathan: Certainly University-supplied residence halls.



Towle: Yes, that's right. Of course, let's face it. This is one reason why the fraternities and sororities flourished the way they did. And there were many student boarding houses, very good ones. Some of them were outstanding. I can think of one or two that were especially so for women students. But the University was not in any way committed to housing its students. This was an entirely different concept that developed later on.

Nathan: Yes, and the students themselves didn't bring this up as an issue?

Towle: No, I don't believe so.

Nathan: At one point President Barrows came up with a proposal for financing residence halls. Nothing ever came of it. This suggested to me that, possibly, there may have been some discussion.

Towle: There may have been some discussion. I don't recall it as part of anything that I was involved in. I became a member of Prytanean Society when I was a junior, and we were always interested in providing money, at least providing the means for getting money, for the infirmary, as it was originally. Later, of course, the hospital was built. When I was in college all we had was an infirmary, but none of the present fine hospital service, equipment, buildings, etc. The infirmary stood just about where the garages of the Women's Faculty Club are now. Along in there. It was a small building. It took care of students, mostly on an out-patient basis. It had bed service, or whatever you want to call it, but on a very limited basis.

Nathan: So during the flu epidemic there really wasn't any organized care.

Towle: No, there wasn't. That's why the barracks were used to take care of the students. Then, I think many of them were confined to their own fraternities and sororities and other living groups. They were asked to take care of others, too, as I recall, if they had any facilities for doing this.

Nathan: So, perhaps, the major student interest in facilities had to do with the infirmary or hospital.



Towle: Yes, at that time. Then later on the Cowell family gave the money for the hospital through the Cowell Foundation, but that was some time later. I don't remember just exactly when that hospital was built. We didn't have all that fanciness when we were in college. [Laughter] I simply don't recall that we did very much about discussing where students lived. The Dean of Women's office, Mrs. Davidson in particular, used to inspect all the boarding houses. The Dean of Women's office was interested, you see. As a matter of fact Mrs. Davidson--she probably tells that in her own oral history of her continuing interest in residence halls, and attempts to prod the administration into action, until they became a reality. She was the one who really pushed residence halls. She pushed them primarily for women, but she believed in them for both men and women. But they were a long time coming. In the meantime, while she was Miss Stebbins' assistant, one of her main tasks was the inspection and keeping in touch with the housemothers, and all that, of the different women's living groups. That included not only all the boarding houses, but it also included the sororities.

Nathan: Much later, when you came into the Dean of Women's office, did you have anything to do with housing or housing problems?

Towle: I would have had if I had stayed long enough. But, you see, I was there scarcely a year. I had been put on the board of Stern Hall. Stern Hall hadn't been completed for very long, not more than five or six years. Mrs. Davidson asked me to represent the office on that board, which I was very happy to do. So I would have been involved in the whole residence hall situation if I had remained at the University. It was about that time that I left and went back to the Marine Corps, so I was on the board for just that very short time.



Graduation

Towle: Well, now, I think I've talked enough about the undergraduate days, don't you? I should get out of college some time! I was graduated in May, 1920, with honors in political science. Graduation in those days meant going to the Greek Theater to get your diploma. And the President handed you your own diploma; you didn't get a little piece of paper saying "Come pick it up."

Nathan: You were in cap and gown?

Towle: Oh, yes. This brings to mind one more undergraduate custom. Often on Fridays I think it was, at eleven o'clock, there was an assembly to which students went--didn't have to go, but there was a speaker always. I don't know that it came every Friday, but when you did go, the seniors were expected to come in cap and gown.

Nathan: And were classes excused?

Towle: Yes. This I can remember very well.

Nathan: There is something very appealing about this, about looking forward to having different privileges as sophomores, different privileges as a junior, different privileges as a senior.

Towle: The students did. The men had different traditions, too, about the kind of headgear and garb they wore on the campus. They had those little dinky caps when they were freshmen. I can't remember about sophomores. When they were juniors, the men had sort of stovepipe hats for a while. But all the men wore Stetsons when they were seniors and corduroy pants. Junior men wore corduroys, too.

Nathan: Now, when you were a senior, then, did you wear your cap and gown at eleven o'clock on Fridays?

Towle: Yes. You didn't have to, but you were urged to, and my sorority was very insistent that we follow University tradition in these matters. As I recall



Towle: it, most of my friends and classmates wore cap and gown. I think the custom didn't last too long after my time. But it was rather nice; gave you a kind of feeling of being important. [Laughter]

Nathan: Oh, yes, I believe it. Then, when you graduated, Did you go right over to Miss Ransom's?

Towle: No. As a senior I had been a reader in Professor Herbert Priestley's course in Spanish-American history. You can see I was busy as a bird dog in my senior year.

Nathan: Weren't you! What fun you must've had!

Towle: Because I wanted to stay around the campus the year after I graduated, he asked me (I wasn't sure then that I wanted to enroll in anything, but I was living in Berkeley, of course, and I thought it would be pleasant to be on the campus) if I would continue to read for him for that year, which I did.

Then at the end of that year certain events had suddenly changed the future pattern of my life entirely so I decided that I would take a job. In the midst of all these student activities I had met Miss (Constance) Steel and Miss (Sue) Love who were both in the Recorder's office. They wanted to know if I would be interested in having a job in Mr. Sutton's office. That's how I happened to take a job at that particular point in that office. It actually was in the University Examiner's Office, which was part of Mr. Sutton's domain. The University Examiner's Office was a forerunner of the Admissions Office. That first year, I remember, I learned to rate credentials of students coming to the University. And I performed other tasks, I don't remember anything special--whatever was assigned me to do. I didn't have a fancy job or anything, but I enjoyed it. People were nice and very cordial to me. I enjoyed my very slight association with Mr. Sutton. I was there for a year, then the idea of doing further studying appealed to me, though at the time I really didn't have anything definite in mind.



Sojourn in Greenwich Village and Return to Mr.  
Sutton's Office

Iowle: Older married friends of mine who lived in New York suggested that I might like to come to New York, that I'd find it stimulating and worthwhile and interesting. Also, a close college friend and her mother were going to New York to live; they came from the east and they were going to return to the east and live in New York for a while. Well, that at least gave my family the assurance that I was not going to New York, the little girl on her own away from home, adrift all by herself. They were perfectly willing for me to go then, as long as I had friends there with whom I would be associated. I would be in good hands in their estimation, and they were right.

I left for the east in the fall of 1922. I was very fortunate to find a little apartment near my college friend and her mother, in Greenwich Village, no less. But it was a highly respectable place. These apartments were around a very attractive garden (I didn't have a garden apartment but many of them did) owned by St. Johns Episcopal Church in Greenwich Village. The Deaconess lived on the same floor that I did. [Laughter] So you can see I was properly chaperoned, unexpectedly so. For some reason, and I was trying the other night to think why, for reasons which are completely obscure to me now, I decided to enroll in a six months' course for college graduates given at the Katharine Gibbs School for secretarial studies in New York. I think I'd read about it or somebody had told me about it, or something of that sort, and it sounded interesting. It was just six months so this was fine, and I thought it wouldn't do me any harm.

Then in addition I enrolled in two graduate courses in history, evening courses, at Columbia. I took the subway (I was not too far from the subway) all the way from--Perry Street was the name of the street I lived on--all the way up to 125th. But it didn't take very long and I enjoyed those courses. One reason I was interested in taking one of the



Towle: courses was because it was given by Professor Carlton Hays, who had come out to the University of California to take over Henry Morse Stephens' classes at the time of his death. I was in one of the classes he took over, and I enjoyed him. He was a very stimulating lecturer. I had one course with him at Columbia. He was one of Columbia's top-notch history professors at that time. These two courses fortunately, later on, I discovered, were acceptable here for my master's degree.

Nathan: That was a surprise.

Towle: Yes. I had thought of going on and taking a master's degree at Columbia. Then, after I'd been in New York a year--it must have been in the summer of '24--I was undecided, anyway, whether I would return home, or look for a job in New York, or do graduate work, when right out of the blue I got a wire from Mr. Sutton asking me if I would accept an appointment, regular appointment, in his office as assistant in the University Examiner's part of his office. He wanted to know by a certain date; and would I think it over? It was very exciting to get a job offer. I kept that telegram for years. It probably fell apart. Well, anyway, it didn't take me too long to wire my acceptance and write him a letter and tell him I would be happy to come back to the University again. That was how I happened to get my first job, my first full-time job, at the University.

Nathan: It came just at the right time.

Towle: Yes, it came just at the right time, and I really was glad to get back, to be back in Berkeley.

Nathan: You'd had your travel.

Towle: That's right. I enjoyed it, I found New York stimulating, and I met a lot of interesting people. I enjoyed the people at the Katharine Gibbs school because most of them were girls who had graduated from various colleges. I was not the school's most brilliant student. I could type all right, but Mrs. Gibbs herself told me I probably would never



Towle: excel in shorthand.

In any event, I returned to the University and my new job in the fall of 1924.

The next topic in our discussion would be how I landed at the Ransom and Bridges School.

Nathan: Yes, and what was the correct name of the school?

Towle: "Miss Ransom and Miss Bridges School for Girls" was the full title of it, and it was in Piedmont.

Nathan: Is the school still functioning?

Towle: No, and I'll tell a little bit about this as we go along. I think I was at the University about three years after I came back from New York and went into Mr. Sutton's office. As I said, at that time it was really the admissions part of his office. It had not then been separated into the two offices although there were the two sections of the office.

Nathan: What would the other section of the office be?

Towle: It was the main Recorder's office; the other was called the University Examiner's office. But at that time they were all part of the Recorder's office. Later they became two separate offices and Professor Ralph Minor was, I think, the first University Examiner. My memory is hazy on this point.

Nathan: Your memory for names is really tremendous.

Towle: I liked the work in the Admissions office, in the University Examiner's office, very much. I was there three years.

Nathan: Did you deal with students?

Towle: Yes, somewhat. I liked especially the opportunity the position gave me to deal with students occasionally because they would come up and ask about their credentials and whether they were satisfactory, and I would tell them what requirements



Towle: they had to meet. I wasn't the only one doing this, but I was one of the assistants who did. We would explain the requirements and what they needed to do. I worked a good deal with the advance standing students. As I told you earlier, I learned to rate credentials, credentials from other institutions. Then we had to see how the work that the student had taken elsewhere would fit into the University of California's program.

Nathan: I might just ask you whether any other university's courses were accepted at full value.

Towle: Oh, yes. There was a long list of universities whose courses were acceptable. All of those that belonged to the Association of American Universities, for example. This part was very interesting. Also, occasionally I saw some of the teachers and the principals of the secondary schools who wanted to know about certain requirements, so they could tell students what to take for entrance to the University. It was that sort of thing. As a matter of fact, this was how I happened to meet Miss Bridges, of Miss Ransom and Bridges school.

Nathan: So there is a link.

Towle: Yes, there is a link. This brought me in touch with her in a round-about way. I remember she used to come in occasionally and talk with our office about University requirements for entrance, and also for the later programs, so her school would be sure to prepare the students at the school properly for whatever course they were interested in taking. Miss Bridges was then the headmistress of the school. She and Miss Marion Ransom were really the co-principals, or had been; Miss Ransom had relinquished her role as headmistress due to a very serious illness. She did not come back to the school, but she lived here in Berkeley and she and Miss Bridges were very close friends anyway, as well as being closely associated with running the school. So I think Miss Ransom's influence was still felt on the school. She was quite a remarkable woman in many ways. Miss Bridges herself was a graduate of the University of California. I don't remember what class. Miss Ransom was a graduate of



Towle: Vassar. Both women were dedicated to the very highest standards for their school. They had originally taught together at the old Anna Head School.

Nathan: Did they consider their school essentially college preparatory?

Towle: Yes, and it was.

Nathan: It was not a finishing school.

Towle: No, not in any sense a finishing school. It was strictly a college preparatory school and all of the work was geared toward college work, academic college work. I was there five years, and in all that time we sent more students east to the women's colleges than anywhere else, but more and more parents were becoming interested in the University of California, so the school itself became interested in preparing for the University. It was a school accredited to the University of California.

Miss Bridges, as I recall (and here again I'm a little hazy, but I think I'm right), first approached me in 1926. She was interested in finding out whether I might be interested later on, or at some time, in a position in the school. I told her, I remember, that I didn't think I was prepared at that moment to accept a position; I might be interested in it but I would have to think about it. She and Miss Ransom at that time were thinking specifically in terms of someone who was fairly young, as I was then, to be a resident dean, which meant of course living at the school twenty-four hours a day. I needed more time to think about it, and I was also on the verge of leaving the University, at least temporarily, to travel in Europe with some friends for a year, and I didn't want to tie myself up at that particular moment until I had made up my mind what I was going to do. It was finally agreed that when I returned from my trip, I would get in touch with Miss Bridges if I was still interested, and the projected position was still open.

I was away from Berkeley, I was abroad, from June, 1926, until about April or May, I think it was May, 1927.



Travelling in Europe

Nathan: Do you feel like talking about your trip?

Towle: It was a most interesting trip. I went with old friends, Dr. and Mrs. Kaspar Pischel of San Francisco, who had traveled a great deal. I was a great friend of their children. Their sons and I had been in college together and one of their daughters and I had also become friends. They were going abroad as they often did. He was an Austrian, and a naturalized American citizen. He was a very famous ophthalmologist in San Francisco. They were wonderful persons to go with because they knew so much about Europe, and I knew nothing, certainly from first-hand experience, at that point. A classmate of mine went with us part of the time, who also knew the Pischels, so the four of us were traveling a good part of the time together, but not entirely. This friend, Margaret Carr, who was my classmate, and I went over first together. We were in London about a month. Had a wonderful time. Then we joined the Pischels-- I'm trying to think where we joined them. I think it was Vienna. We stayed for about a month in places like Vienna and Rome.

Nathan: Did you get to Paris at all?

Towle: And Paris. Oh, no, I'm wrong here. Margaret Carr and I went first to Paris. We went together to Paris for a month, not London. Then we met the Pischels. Then Margaret left, went on to Rome or somewhere else, I've forgotten just where. Then the three of us, Dr. and Mrs. Pischel and I, traveled together for quite a while, and stayed, as I say, a month in Vienna, a month in Rome. The month in England was when I was on my way back. I came back there and stayed by myself; then met the Pischels on the steamer from Southampton on the boat coming home. It was a wonderful experience for me. It wasn't just one of these touristy things. We stayed long enough for me, at least, to really get a feel of places. I loved Rome, just loved it. It was terribly exciting; in fact, I thought all of



Towle: it was wonderful. And, of course, the Pischels knew so much about Vienna, that part of the world. We went up into the Tyrol. Dr. Pischel had been born in Innsbruck, so he was eager to have me see that part of Europe.

Nathan: With your interest in political science, did you go to see Parliament in action?

Towle: No, I didn't see Parliament in action. I don't remember why.

Nathan: I'm sure you were doing other things.

Towle: I probably was. Of course I went to the Parliament buildings, but I didn't see the Parliament in action. That was a very, very interesting year for me and it ended all too soon as things do.



## MISS RANSOM AND MISS BRIDGES SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Nathan: What happened when you came back to Berkeley?

Towle: When I came back, Mr. Sutton indicated that he would be happy to have me return to the University, but I decided that much as I enjoyed working in his office I thought it was time for me to branch out. So I called Miss Bridges, or saw her (I've forgotten now how we got in touch with one another) and told her that I was back and possibly interested in her position at the school if the position was still there.

Resident Dean, and Co-Principal

Nathan: This was as resident dean.

Towle: Resident dean, yes. This was in 1927. This must have been the late summer of 1927, before the school had actually opened, and it opened toward the end of September as I recall it. I went to the Ransom school as resident dean, and I held that position for two years. Then in 1929 (when the "crash" came), upon the retirement of Miss Bridges, the school's board of trustees asked me and Miss Elizabeth Blakey, who for many years had been the school's academic head, to be co-principals. She lives in Los Gatos, and did then. We are good friends. I see her occasionally.

Nathan: Weren't you rather young for such responsibility?

Towle: Yes, I was fairly young; in fact, we both were. Let's see, I was...



Nathan: You were under thirty, surely.

Towle: I was about twenty....Well I can tell you how old, 1898 to 1927, what's that?

Nathan: That would be twenty-nine.

Towle: Yes. Well, anyway, out to Piedmont I went. My responsibilities were for the overall administration of the school. Miss Blakey, Elizabeth Blakey, continued as academic head. She was excellent at this, planning the courses, and overseeing the records, and that sort of thing. She and I took charge of the school in 1929 and we knew, because the trustees had told both of us exactly what the situation was, that the school was in serious financial difficulties.

Nathan: Was it a comparatively costly school?

Towle: Yes, it was. Any private school is expensive, really, and this one was no exception.

Nathan: Did most of the girls live in?

Towle: No, it had many day pupils, too. It was hoped that new blood would infuse new life into the school. Actually, for two good years it did, but by then the depression had hit everyone very hard--none more so than some of the most enthusiastic parents and supporters of the school. The school's chief difficulty was its lack of boarders at this time. The day school went along reasonably well, but everything about the school, the plant of the school, was geared to a full complement of boarding pupils.

Nathan: About how many?

Towle: I was trying to think. I think we could take somewhere up to thirty-five or forty, somewhere in there. That may be a little low. It was a beautiful plant. The residence for the girls was a lovely place. Miss Ransom and Miss Bridges both had excellent taste and it was reflected in the whole school.



Nathan: Was this for girls of high school age?

Towle: At that time there were eighth graders, a very few eighth graders and the rest were in high school. Occasionally a seventh grader was taken as a boarder, but no one below that. The day school ran all the way from the first grade through high school. Elizabeth Blakey and I instituted a preschool for the three years that we were the co-principals. It was very interesting and very successful.

The parents simply didn't have the money for an expensive school in those days, which all boarding schools were--all the private schools were having difficulties, and the Ransom School unfortunately was dependent entirely on its own revenue.

Nathan: It had no endowment?

Towle: No. There was absolutely no endowment to fall back on, which would have tided it over. Generous trustees and friends tried to keep it on its feet, but the odds were just too great. Mr. Wallace Alexander was one of the special angels of the school, the late Mr. Wallace Alexander. His daughter, Martha Alexander, now Mrs. Frank Gerbode, had been a pupil at the school. The Alexanders lived in Piedmont. Mr. Alexander had been very interested in the school, and Mrs. Alexander, too, and they had hoped very much to keep the school alive. He wasn't the only one on the board, but he was, I think, the chief angel of the school.

Finally at the end of the school year in 1932, our last graduating class was 1932, the trustees agreed very regretfully and unhappily, but I think quite realistically, that the school would have to be closed.

Nathan: That must have been a painful decision.

Towle: Yes, it was very painful. That ended that chapter of my own career, but I always will have very pleasant memories of the school and my association there and of the people with whom I came in touch



Towle: and with whom I was associated. We had an excellent faculty.

Nathan: How large a faculty did you have?

Towle: I was trying to think. Some of them were not full-time, they came in for certain courses. In the secondary school part, we must have had a faculty of some ten teachers. In the lower school there were the lower school principal and, I would think we would have had easily that number if not more.

Nathan: Did you feel personally acquainted with all of the students?

Towle: Oh, yes. I knew all of the students. We had a convocation every morning. I had to lead that. We always had some sort of program in the morning. I got to know the students very well indeed, all of them, and I enjoyed them very much, all the way up from the little ones through the high school.

Nathan: Did you have any particular philosophy of running the school?

Towle: Well, I don't know whether it was a philosophy or not, but I realized some things. I think the students themselves appreciated having younger persons dealing with some of their problems. I'm sure that we were considered fairly liberal; we made changes in some of the rules and regulations about what they might and might not do. We were a little more liberal about their weekends, when they could see parents. Before, I think there were only a certain number of weekends a year when they could have anyone, including parents, come to the school. I don't think it was just due to Elizabeth Blakey and me being there, I think it was just a change in the times, too. Every once in a while I'll see students who went to the Ransom school, and they often mention the good grounding that they had for whatever they went on to do afterward. Many of them did go to college elsewhere and made great successes. It was an excellent school.

They were not only happy ones, those years, and useful, but in many ways very satisfactory as



Towle: far as I was concerned because I did have an opportunity to try my hand at administration on a fairly high level. I was still, as you have said, fairly young. More importantly, they provided me with a chance to learn about students in their daily lives, things that they were interested in and their relationships with others. I really enjoyed them, and I think they did me. We had a very pleasant rapport. I, being youngish, was not their stereotype of a headmistress. As a matter of fact, I think we dropped the title head-mistress finally, and called ourselves principals. I participated--I say "I" because I'm talking about myself, but Miss Blakey did too--in many of their activities with them, including for me horseback riding [laughter] at least once a week. We rode in the hills back of Piedmont. I was never much of an equestrienne, but believe me, I went the whole way with them. I cannot say that I've ever been awfully enthusiastic about horses, but I learned to ride an English saddle and I was right there with the rest of them.

### Finding a Vocation

I think it was then that I came to realize that working with young people, especially in--I think the pedagogical term is "a learning situation"--could really offer lifelong and rewarding enrichment and experience. I was very glad to have had that opportunity, so I look back with very real appreciation on those five years at the Ransom School.

Nathan: You were really extraordinarily lucky in that you didn't have to go through all the education courses in order to do it.

Towle: If it hadn't been a private school, I would never have had this chance because, you know, in a public school you have to. I don't think I ever would have. Most of my work was administrative. I conducted the



Towle: faculty meetings and all that, but Elizabeth Blakey was the one who had a great more dealings day by day with the teachers than I. This was a relatively small school--I don't suppose we had more than three hundred at any one time, counting our day pupils. That's a small situation. You certainly know people very well if you see them five days a week and generally on the weekends, too.

Nathan: As a co-principal, then, did you live there?

Towle: Oh, yes, yes indeed. And we lived very pleasantly, I must say. Miss Blakey and I each had very nice quarters in the residence building. We took our meals, of course, with the boarders.

We always had quite lively Sunday suppers to which we often invited outside speakers. This was an interesting part of the school life. It was confining, yes, sometimes I found it confining because I wasn't able to do a lot of the things with my own friends on the outside. My time was pretty well taken up at the school, but I didn't mind too much. I had many friends there and I was interested in what we were doing.

Nathan: What ever became of the buildings?

Towle: The buildings finally were torn down.

Nathan: Where were they located?

Towle: They were at the end of Hazel Lane. We used to get letters addressed to us: our names, "Miss Ransom and Miss Bridges School, the end of Maiden Lane." [Laughter] This was a common occurrence. It was actually Hazel Lane. And Hazel Lane, of course, is still in Piedmont. There are some beautiful homes on what used to be the school property, lovely homes. The school was off by itself. The grounds were adjacent to Piedmont Park, which at that time was quite beautiful. The school didn't have a tremendous amount of ground, but you had the feeling of its being very spacious. It's a very pretty part of Piedmont, still, not far from what was then the streetcar line on Highland Avenue, the main street. You got off there, then you would turn



Towle: into Requa Road and then into Hazel Lane. Lovely trees; the garden was always kept so beautifully; lawns in front of the main building, and there was a great drive around like this [semi-circle], and you came in and went around that way. It was really a charming place. I liked it because it was beautiful; the place was nice to be in, too, as nice as the people.



## RETURN TO THE UNIVERSITY

Nathan: What did you decide to do after the school closed?

Powle: At the time the school closed I was thirty-four years old. It seemed a good time to consider carefully what my next step would be. In 1929, I think it was, and 1930, while I was at the school, I had gone back to the University and taken one or two graduate courses thinking that I would eventually work at least toward a master's degree. But I soon found it was somewhat unrealistic to undertake graduate work and do it justice while I had such a demanding job. It was demanding in many ways; I think a twenty-four hour a day job is apt to be. So, I think I may have taken these courses for a semester, or possibly two, I don't recall. I decided not to go on with graduate work at that moment. After the closing of the school, however, this seemed a propitious time to consider graduate work in earnest.

So I returned to Berkeley and my parents' home, lived with them for a while and did nothing very much for a few months. Then I decided not only to take graduate courses, but a part-time job in what by then was the Registrar's Office--when it was offered me--I've forgotten who first offered it to me, but I had a lot of friends in the office. It was certainly not very arduous, and it was pleasant and it also gave me a little money, which was fine.

I'd been independent for five years and I felt I ought not to expect my mother and father to support me. Of course as long as I lived with them, they would never consider my paying anything for room and board. This was my home as much as theirs, they said, and I was to live there. But I felt I ought to be doing something, get some money of my own. Also, I had liked the feeling of being independent and this gets under your skin.



Towle: So I did take this part-time job, and I did enroll as a graduate student.

Nathan: There was no problem of being admitted?

Towle: No.

Nathan: Was it the Department of Political Science?

Towle: That's right. No, there was no problem about being admitted.

Nathan: Your grades were all right.

Towle: My grades were all right. I knew that if I really were going to study in earnest I should get on with it, so after about a year I gave up this part-time work and applied for a teaching fellowship in the Department of Political Science and received one.

Nathan: Who was chairman of the department then, do you remember?

Towle: I think it was Dr. Barrows, but I'll have to check to make sure. This would have been in 1934.

### American Institutions

Nathan: Did you have a special interest?

Towle: I was particularly interested, as I think I mentioned, in American government. It may have been because of that, I had declared this interest in filling out my application, whether that was the reason I was put in charge of American Institutions or not I don't know, but I was, as a teaching fellow.

Nathan: Well, you always went to the top.

Towle: I wouldn't say that. Also, don't forget, I was quite a bit older, at that time, than most of the



Towle: other graduate students who were either teaching fellows or doing graduate work.

Nathan: You wouldn't necessarily be so now.

Towle: I was going to say, this was one very interesting thing, and I was thinking about this. I wouldn't be now at all, but at that time I was, certainly in that department. I'm sure this is one of the reasons I was put in American Institutions. That at that time was a requirement for the bachelor's degree. Students either had to take equivalent courses or pass an examination. If they took equivalent courses elsewhere they had to present their transcripts and description of the courses and then I would evaluate them. There was some member of the faculty who was chairman, of course, of the American Institutions course, itself. I was responsible to him. Whether it was Professor Ray...

Nathan: P. Orman Ray?

Towle: Yes. He and I were great friends. He was the one who eventually supervised my thesis, or rather, served on the thesis committee. I wasn't doing American Institutions on my own but I was in charge of the leg work, the paperwork, and all. The students would come to see me. If I had any questions about whether they were eligible or not, I would, of course, take it to the person in charge of American Institutions. I think there usually was a committee (it has to be a committee [laughter]) that would decide, if it came to that. I had a little office under the rafters of the third floor of South Hall.

Nathan: What a delightful spot.

Towle: Just a little, tiny office. It happened to be right next to Professor Ray's quite large office. It really was under the rafters. It had no direct outside light. But it was an office, and had a desk and telephone. I certainly felt very important. I held forth there for that year.

Then I received my master's degree in May, 1935. As I told you a moment ago, Professor P. Orman Ray of the Political Science Department was chairman of



Towle: my committee. One of the other two members of the committee was Frederick L. Paxson. You knew him, didn't you?

Nathan: No, I knew Professor Ray, but not Professor Paxson.

Towle: He was professor of history, an outstanding professor of history. And Lawrence Harper. Lawrence Harper, who of course is now, and has been for many years, a full professor of history, was then an assistant professor. Lawrence Harper was in my class in college. Well, anyway, I enjoyed thoroughly this part of the work. I also enjoyed my graduate work and my American Institutions responsibilities. I really hated to give up my little South Hall office when the time came.

Nathan: Did you do any lecturing?

Towle: Oh, no. No, I didn't do any lecturing. But I knew then that I wanted definitely to be associated with academic life in some capacity. I wasn't quite sure at that point quite what. I never have wavered from that idea. After all, my military service in World War II and for five years afterwards were very important and stimulating episodes in my life, from which I learned a very great deal and to which I gave wholeheartedly of both my interests and abilities. I shall be grateful always for the experience and the opportunity, which was really quite unexpected and a rare one in many ways, to be part of those times. I've been trying to think of the quotation which I know is in the Oliver Wendell Holmes book Yankee from Olympus. I'll get it because I've got the book and I'd like to put in it in here because I think it is quite apropos. Also I remember that I used it on more than one occasion when I was making speeches in the Marine Corps. [Laughter] So I think it ought to be put down somewhere. But I want to get an exact quotation.

Nathan: I'm tempted to look through the book and see if I can find it.

Towle: All right. I'll find it.

Nathan: Something about participating with passion, or something?



Towle: Yes, that's right. It's something about...I know it starts out, "Life is action..." I think this is the way it goes: "Life is action and passion." And then, let's see...then there is something about a man sharing...

Nathan: "...unless he shares in the life of his times, he can be accused of never having lived at all."

Towle: Yes. "He does so at the peril of not having lived at all." Or something of that sort. It's an excellent quotation. And it was quite apropos in a way. I felt this way very strongly myself.

Nathan: In whatever you did, you really plunged in all the way, didn't you?

Towle: [Laughter] Yes. A little too well, maybe, at times.

Well, anyway, to come back to 1935. After having achieved my master's degree--I have a copy of my thesis right down there [on the shelf]. I was looking it over the other day.

#### Thesis and a Master's Degree in Political Science

Nathan: Let's see, I'd like to see what the thesis looks like.

Towle: This is my magnum opus.

Nathan: As a matter of fact, I read it. I read it not just because I was coming to see you but because I needed it on an earlier occasion.

Towle: I had forgotten all about this. I opened it and of course here was all this (it's been on the shelves forever) correspondence from Professor Ray.

Nathan: Oh, yes. They still use blue interdepartmental paper, don't they? [Laughter]



Towle: It's kind of ancient. You see, it's yellowed with age.

Nathan: May I just read this letter so it'll be on the tape?

Towle: You certainly may.

Nathan: This is July 29, 1936.

Towle: The thesis is '35 and then.... Well, you read through first and see if you want it all on tape.

Nathan: This is Professor Ray being complimentary. This is something every student loves to hear. "May 25, 1935. Dear Miss Towle: I hope that the spirit will move you while I am away for a month to see what you can do toward writing a summary of your master's thesis on 'The Presidential Veto Since 1889.' Try to compress it into six or seven typed pages, double spaced, and include two or three of the tables in the appendix. It seems to me that such an article might find favor in the eyes of the editor of the American Political Science Review. I shall get back to San Francisco on June 29, provided I survive two sea voyages. Very truly, P.O. Ray."

Towle: Well here's the evidence. I did it.

Nathan: When did the article get published? Is there a date on it?

Towle: This was published--this is a reprint. You know they send you dozens of reprints. This is a reprint from the American Political Science Review, Volume 31, number 1, of February, 1937.

Nathan: Ah, it didn't take as long as it usually does.

Towle: [Laughter] No.

Nathan: And then here is a noted dated July 29, 1936. [reading] "Dear Miss Towle: Your opus magnum is most creditable and the chairman of your final committee recommends that you be awarded the appropriate degree summa cum laude with all the rights, privileges, and immunities thereto



Nathan: appertaining. It is so well done I shall send a copy to my daughter in Chicago and to some other eastern friends. Thank you. Very truly yours, P.O. Ray."

Towle: Anyway, I kept those all this time here, and I just had to laugh when I discovered them. There are about ten copies of the reprint here that I didn't know what to do with. They sent me dozens of them.

Nathan: Let me ask you first, before you generously give it to me. If you can spare five of them, we could either keep them with your papers or bind one in with each of the copies of your transcript.

Towle: Certainly. You can have five right now.

Nathan: That would be very interesting, I think, and very worth hanging on to.

Towle: They'll get lost sooner or later if I keep them around here, I assure you.

Nathan: Thank you.

Towle: Well, that was that. I enjoyed doing the work on the thesis and working in the stacks and having access to the stacks and all that business, you know. It really was fun.

Nathan: After all these complimentary results, then you had to think again, I guess, of what you wanted to do.

Towle: Achieving the master's degree was a satisfaction, and I had another year's appointment as a teaching fellow if I continued with graduate study. At the time I thought most seriously of embarking on the Ph.D. program. I'll have to confess, however, that in this latter I did not receive what you'd call the wholehearted enthusiastic support of the department.

Nathan: That's no reflection on you.

Towle: It wasn't because they didn't like me, or didn't think I had done good work, or was not capable of doing good work. This I'm sure of. But as some of



Towle: my friends in the department said to me, it was very difficult to know what to do with a woman who had a Ph.D. in political science. [Laughter]

Nathan: They still haven't found out.

Towle: I'm interested that this is pretty much the attitude even today.

Nathan: It's an extraordinary attitude. Even if you're not an ardent feminist, it does make you wonder.

Towle: It not only makes you wonder. It makes you a little annoyed.

Nathan: Yes. We agree on that one.

Towle: So I thought about this. As I say, I didn't receive enthusiastic encouragement for dashing into the Ph.D. program, which I realized would have been fairly arduous and a fairly long one. Two or three of my special friends on the faculty in the department were quite frank about this. I think in many ways their realism was commendable, although I didn't agree with it. They were kind enough to be quite frank about the situation. I had some misgivings of my own, too, because I was not at all sure that I would make an awfully good teacher. I was not at all sure of this. I would have been adequate, I think. But basically I am not a scholar. I would have done a creditable job because this is part of my nature, to do a creditable job when I undertake anything, but I had a feeling that I probably wasn't going to be an outstanding teacher. There are just too many mediocre teachers in the world. I decided that I didn't want to be one of them and that my real abilities lay along administrative lines.

So regrettably I gave up my second year of the teaching fellowship, but only after I had been approached by Mr. Farquhar of the University Press who was looking for someone for his staff. I can remember his saying, "I want someone who knows the University quite well." Well, I knew the University quite well by that time. [Laughter]

Nathan: From the cellar to the attic.



Towle: Yes, that's right. And I think it was Mr. Steel, who was then the Registrar, Mr. Thomas B. Steel, who mentioned the possibility that I might be interested to Mr. Farquhar. That's how I happened to have the interview with him in the first place.

Nathan: Now, this was Samuel Farquhar?

The Ph.D. for Deans

Towle: Yes, that's right. Mr. Farquhar got in touch with me. He was eager to have someone by the fall. This would have been 1935. I saw him during the early summer as I recall. I gave it a good deal of thought, because I realized then I was really committing myself more or less permanently not to go on with work toward a degree.--Oh, and I might say, I'd like to back up here just a little bit, I wished many times, while I was dean, when I was appointed Dean of Students, particularly, that I had pursued the degree just to have it. It would have been a very useful thing to have. I regretted that I did not have a Ph.D. at that point. I doubt that I ever would have used it teaching. But I think in many ways I would have been smart to get it, considering the type of administrative work I finally did end up in. You know you can always look back and think what you might have done. But there's no use looking backward on these things. It's just a passing thought.

Nathan: Yes, I suppose it is important in an academic community.

Towle: In an academic setting, especially when so many aspirants for jobs as deans of students now don't get appointments unless they have their Ph.D.s. Many of them don't get appointments if they don't have at least an Ed.D. I wouldn't have taken an Ed.D. on a bet. [Laughter] Excuse me.



Nathan: I feel exactly the same about the Ed.D.

Towle: At that time in 1935 I could have gone ahead and gotten the degree and kept it in cold storage, so to speak, but I didn't, and I have regretted that. I don't think it hampered me particularly, because by the time I became a dean I was pretty well known on the campus. I had a good many friends among the faculty and in the community. I never felt that this was a particular handicap, but I certainly would urge it on any young person who is thinking seriously of "deaning" as a profession, especially if he aspires to be Dean of Students. I didn't aspire to be Dean of Students, I aspired to be Dean of Women, which I was; but I was foisted into the position of Dean of Students. It would have been a help to have had a Ph.D.

Nathan: Probably the span of time in which you were active really covered the time when the Ph.D. became very important.

Towle: It did. There's no question about it. When I was Dean of Women, for instance, there were a few deans of women--I won't say very few, but there were not the great number that there are now--with either a Ph.D. or an Ed.D. Now it is considered almost necessary, as a sort of a union card, to have it. Students ask me what I recommend they do to become dean, a successful dean. I tell them, "One of the first things you should think of is getting your doctorate," and a doctorate, I believe, in good, solid, academic subjects, not in educational theory or something of that sort. I think that if you have a Ph.D. you're miles ahead of the person who hasn't. I didn't mean in your abilities, but just in your acceptance in an academic community. Anyone who sees this who has an Ed.D. degree probably won't like these statements, but they're true.

Nathan: Yes, and it's important to have your view, whether others are going to say yes, no, or maybe.

Towle: Anyway, I didn't get the degree, but I would like to have that on the record because I think it's important.



Nathan: Of course, a stranger coming to the campus probably would have felt this far, far more than you did.

Towle: This was it, you see. I was among friends. I was in the "in" group so it was all right. But still.

Nathan: Just what was the job that Mr. Farquhar had to offer?

Towle: He told me, as I recall, that he wanted an assistant to the manager.

Nathan: He was the manager, is that right?

Towle: His title was Manager of the University of California Press. The Press and the Printing Department had been put together at that time under him as the head.

Nathan: So he also headed the Printing Department.

Towle: That's right. It was all one operation. Mr. McHenry, for instance was the Superintendent of the Printing Department, and Mr. Harold Small was Editor of the Press, but Mr. Farquhar was the overall manager of the whole organization. At that time the press was in its old building there on the corner of Bancroft and what is Barrow Lane. Not Barrows Lane, Barrow Lane. For years it stood right next to the area where Sproul Hall is now, there on the corner.

Nathan: I'm so charmed with this, because that's exactly what an editor would say, to make sure you don't put an s on it where there isn't one. [Laughter]

Towle: Well, you know, for a long time, the sign always had the s on it. I remember wondering about it because I had been told it was Barrow Lane. I suppose whoever was making the signs thought this must be named for Mr. Barrows, Professor Barrows, but it wasn't. I don't know where the Barrow came from. But it's not Barrows, it's Barrow. You look at it now and it's singular. [Laughter]

Nathan: Were the presses and everything, all the equipment there?



Towle: Everything was there, oh yes. The press occupied the whole building. There were plans even then in the drawing stage for a new press. This was '35. Well, by '39, I think it was, we moved into the new building on the corner of Oxford and Center Street. The press and the printing department were still one. Now, I believe, they are separated again.

Nathan: Yes, indeed they are. Are they physically separated?

Towle: Oh, yes. The press offices, the editorial offices, as I understand it (I haven't been there) are where the old Land Bank used to be at the head of Kittredge and Oxford. The University Extension is in there, too. Some of the press offices are in there. I'm not sure just which ones. I think the editorial staff is. Mr. Farquhar felt very strongly about having the two parts of the University Press under one head and also in one building.

#### The University Press and Official Publications

Nathan: Did you have a formal title in the Press job?

Towle: My actual University title, I mean the budget title, was Editorial Assistant. But Mr. Farquhar called me Assistant to the Manager for a while and I did various and sundry assignments for him. Don't ask me just what. At the moment, I can't think. I assisted him with a lot of administrative work in the office. The person that can tell you more about the University Press than anyone around is Miss Hazel Niehaus, who was with the original old Printing Department when it was under Mr. Flynn. She retired from the University a year ago, certainly not more than two years ago. She really held that whole place together. She is a fine person.

Nathan: Was this the Printing Department or the Press?



Towle: She originally was with the Printing Department. There was not the press as we know it today. And Mr. Flynn was then the supervisor of the Printing Department. I don't know exactly how an editorial committee, and there must have been one on the campus even at that time, worked in this framework.

Nathan: I believe that a committee determines what the press prints.

Towle: Oh, yes.

Nathan: But the Printing Department has contracts with different people and groups.

Towle: I think that's still true. Well, the press was growing by leaps and bounds at this time and Mr. Farquhar was very knowledgeable about not only good books but was especially so about fine printing and about papers; he was really an expert on papers. I learned a lot about paper and printing from him. It was very interesting. By the time we moved to the new building on Oxford Street, I held the position of Editor of Official Publications. This is what I think he had in mind all along. That's why he wanted somebody who knew the University. There was a demand to some way correlate, and bring together all of the various publications, like the General Catalogs, the Summer Session Bulletins, and the Letters and Science Bulletin, the different college bulletins--to have them edited more or less by one person, or at least brought together in some way so there wouldn't be such a waste, and have the style the same and all the rest of it. This was considered a very important step forward, and I think it was, as a matter of fact. At that time UCLA was just emerging as a major campus of the University. I made trips to UCLA about the catalog, about the UCLA catalog, at that time, on occasion about other things, and also the Summer Session catalog. I'd go down and confer with the summer sessions administrative assistant or she would come to see me in Berkeley. I don't mean that I supplied the material. But I was supposed to decide about the covers in consultation with them and about the general format. The general format was to be pretty much the same for both Berkeley and Los Angeles.



Nathan: Did you have artists to do the layouts?

Towle: No. This was done in the printing department. When Mr. Tommassini came, he was excellent at this. Of course this was his field. Not that the official publications needed so much beautification, that wasn't the point. Part of this was to facilitate getting the work into the printing department on time, to keep a schedule, to work with the people in the printing department, to see that everything was gotten out within a reasonable length of time so that things wouldn't all be piling up at the time the University opened in the fall.

Nathan: That seems like an incredibly complicated thing to get done.

Towle: It really wasn't too much so, and it was interesting. Of course I liked it all--talking with people about this, that and the other thing, and I enjoyed having this job which was newly set up. I had a very nice office at the press, at the head of the stairs, looking out over the campus.

I was also asked to put out a new publication both for Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Nathan: Was this The University: An Introduction to the Berkeley Campus?

Towle: Yes. An Introduction to the Berkeley Campus. And later there was one An Introduction to the Los Angeles Campus.

Nathan: Apparently they're both 1936, so you had a very busy year.

Towle: Yes, I had a busy year. That was, I think, maybe one of my first assignments, to get material for these publications. This I enjoyed thoroughly. In the first place I liked the writing part; I wrote both of them. I wrote both of these, consulting with the people both here and at UCLA. For example, the Registrars at Berkeley and Los Angeles, and the deans. Also they had people they submitted it to there, I'm sure. But I got together the material



Towle: for them, and also the pictures. I had photographers available. I told them what sorts of pictures were needed. The booklet was to hand out mostly to the public. They could pick it up at the Registrar's office or at the admissions office. Students could get copies, but it was not meant to take the place of any of the catalogs. The catalogs were considered too stiff, all right for students who had to have all this information, but the University wanted something that was a little more readable, that appealed to the lay person. So, this is how these booklets came into being. They were very attractive.

Nathan: What a delightful assignment.

Towle: It really was a delightful assignment and I learned a lot about editing. I worked with the printing department on the layout and the whole thing. Mr. Farquhar more or less left me to do this as my assignment. He was very much interested in it. In that way he was an exceedingly good person to work with because he expected you to assume responsibility. If he thought you could, he didn't interfere.

Nathan: Is this part of the secret of being a good administrator?

Towle: I think it is, yes.

Nathan: You pick someone whom you believe--

Towle: Will assume responsibility and come through with what he's supposed to do, and that's that. I don't mean you don't give him some guidance along the way. That's only expected of you. But I do think people work best if they feel they have a responsibility of their own which is theirs to perform. I don't want to get into a lecture.

Nathan: I want to come back to this. I'm interested in your views on administration.

Towle: I feel this way about a lot of student things, too. I think students work best or are at their best when they are given very real responsibility about many things. However, that's another story.



Nathan: A good story.

Towle: At least another story at this juncture.

Nathan: Did you have occasion to deal with other authors, faculty members who submitted material?

Towle: No, I didn't have anything to do with the so-called scholarly publications, with the manuscripts that were to be published by the press or that were to be passed by the editorial committee. I had no dealings with the editorial committee or with the scholarly publications. Mr. Small as chief Editor of the Press, had several assistant editors, and he would parcel out the work to them. We had an excellent editorial staff. There's no question about that.

We had very pleasant relationships. The faculty were coming in all the time, of course, about this or that. Then we also had the sales department, which I had nothing to do with.

Nathan: Did the press promote sales actively?

Towle: Yes. It was really a very lively organization. I don't know why it was separated again--why the two, actually three, departments were separated. I was not in any way connected with the Press when this happened.

Nathan: Did your interest, then, remain primarily with official publications?

Towle: Yes, my work and my interest at the press were primarily with official publications. I also helped with getting the material together for the editor of the Pacific Historical Review. The press published that. Professor John Caughey of UCLA--professor of history--was editor. I've forgotten whether there were others or not, but I remember him in particular. I helped by insuring that the material for each issue got to the printer on time and all that sort of thing, and looked over the material mostly for any obvious errors. I didn't do the proofreading. That was done in the proofreading department, but there are always things you



Towle: look for. Then if there was something that I thought the editors might want to change, I would always let the editor know--Professor Caughey or whoever it happened to be.

Then, also there was the folklore journal--Western Folklore. For a short time, that was just before I went to war, I was assisting in the same way with that.

Nathan: Was Professor Archer Taylor involved in that journal?

Towle: Yes, Archer Taylor, and his wife, too.

Nathan: Hasseltine?

Towle: Yes, they were both involved in this. Details would have to be looked into, because I'm a little vague about this journal as you can see, after all these years.

I left on military leave from the press, I guess it must have been around the middle of February or the first of March, 1943. That is a whole other chapter, my Marine Corps service, which I think it would be just as well if we do all together because it will be easier. I don't know whether you have any other questions about the press.

Nathan: I wonder if you had done any other writing there at the press besides this special assignment.

Towle: No. As I say, my assignment was to oversee these official publications. I had to deal with a good many members of the faculty about courses and the description of the courses sometimes, things of that sort. But, of course, these were all departmental things. It was always the chairman of the department with whom I talked.

Nathan: I wonder if there is any part of your education or your experience that you see as having been especially helpful in your editorial assignment. Or is it just native wit?



Towle: I don't know about native wit. I've always been able, given time, to write fairly well. But I like to have time to think, and I like the use of words. I really enjoyed seeing the finished product. You wanted to go on and do more of it. I think I would have enjoyed being a regular editor, too, of the press, one of the editorial assistants. But this was my assignment, to do this other, so I did it--very happily. I didn't have the opportunity to do the other. My work did not in any way involve the regular scholarly publications.

Nathan: Do you remember any of the people you worked with at the press?

Towle: Oh, yes. When I first went there, there were four or five of us, I think I made the fifth. I'm sure they looked with a jaundiced eye at my coming into a very small little office on the second floor of the old press building there on Barrow Lane. [Laughter] Mrs. Emily Wilkie was the senior one in the office. When she retired, she had been at the press for at least forty or forty-five years. She is no longer living. She was really a remarkable woman in many ways. She had been at the press for I don't know how long when I arrived. The rest of us were just babes in the woods according to Mrs. Wilkie, but she was terribly nice to all of us. You could go to her with anything, she was very helpful. She knew the press and the printing department well. For a long time she had been the only editorial assistant.

She and Miss Niehaus were the two standbys in the press for many years. Miss Niehaus was very young when she originally had come there. She must have been, oh, very young because she was still there until a couple of years ago when she retired. She had been continuously there, under Mr. Flynn, Mr. Farquhar, through all the various changes. This in itself, the press, would make an interesting story, I think. Probably somebody will do that.

Nathan: Yes, Mr. Tommassini is going to be interviewed.

Towle: Mr. Tommassini will be an excellent one because he knows a lot about it. Of course, he wasn't there



Towle: in the early days but he helped make the press really famous, I mean its printing. Put it very much on the map. He's a delightful person. I can't tell you how much he taught me about printing and about layouts and about this and that having to do with printing. He was a wonderful teacher, too. It was always a pleasure to run down from my office to the plant. Mr. Tommassini was always most helpful. I enjoyed my association with him very much. He sends me--and I treasure them very much--his little booklets that he gets out every Christmas. They are beautifully done.

Nathan: I see, he is a fine printer on his own.

Towle: He's a fine printer, oh, yes.

Nathan: Did he interest you in collecting limited editions?

Towle: No. You evidently saw the Colophon up there? [on the bookcase shelf] I got interested in that, I think, when I first went to the press. Mr. Farquhar, himself, you see, was a book collector of sorts, and he was the one who was instrumental in getting Mr. Tommassini to come. The press in the new building had a very fine library of excellent books on printing, and all. I used to look up some of these things, and take an interest in finding out more.

Nathan: I wondered whether your connection with the Daily Cal first got you interested.

Towle: It may have but I doubt it. I've really never analyzed it. Harold Small was at the press as editor when I first went there. I don't know when he first joined the staff, but I have a feeling he hadn't been there so very long before I came.

Then there was a young man--Ruth Donnelly's brother--Dan Norton. He was an editorial assistant, working with Harold Small, and he was in the office we all shared. He was a delightful person.

Nathan: Apparently he wrote poetry and other things.



Towle: Yes, he did. He was an unusual person in many ways. He had a very fine mind. It's too bad that his health was always very precarious, even then. We all used to have lots of fun, some very good times. Ann Hus was at the press then, too. She's now Mrs. David Brower.

Nathan: Oh, is that right? She must have been fun.

Towle: Yes, Ann was fun, and was the very young one, you know. I don't remember just where she worked but I think it was the sales department on the same floor as our office.

It was an interesting time. Then Mr. Farquhar's office was downstairs. And Miss Niehaus sat outside his office to meet the public. Then there was Mr. McHenry, who had a little office next to Mr. Farquhar's. He was superintendent, as I said earlier, of the printing department. I get mixed up in my own mind about the old building and the new one in some respects.

Nathan: As you've been talking I can picture that old building. It was a rather long building.

Towle: Yes. All the printing presses were out there in the back. It later became the mailing division; oh, it went through various stages. Various organizations in the University occupied it. At the time it was finally torn down, it was occupied mostly by the mailing division. Then there was a so-called conference room which you climbed a long flight of outside stairs to reach, which used to be the old sales department. It was an old, old building when I was first in it. Its days were numbered even then.

Nathan: Yes, I had the feeling the ivy was sort of holding the bricks together.

Towle: I think it was. [Laughter] I've often wondered how those heavy printing presses stayed up on the floor. I guess the underpinnings were pretty good, and after all they were on the ground floor.

Nathan: Are you in touch with the printing press or the printing department?



Towle: No, not any more. During World War II I was on military leave from the press--from 1943 until 1946, just a little over three and a half years. When I returned to the campus in 1946, I decided not to go back to the press. I felt that I had finished that chapter in my life, and still hoped that some day I eventually might be in the Dean of Women's office. I had had one year there after my wartime service.

Nathan: This is something I must remember to ask you about, getting out and then going back to the Marine Corps.

Towle: I think this is a good place to stop. Next, I will take you into the Marine Corps.





Colonel Katherine A. Towle, U.S.M.C.,  
wearing the evening dress uniform for  
women officers. November 1950.



Colonel Katherine A. Towle  
Director of Women Marines - March 1949  
Official Photo



## THE MARINE CORPS: TWO TOURS OF DUTY

Towle: The tragic attack on Pearl Harbor occurred on December 7, 1941, and the United States declared war on Japan. The country was not prepared for war. So desperate were our manpower needs that we were in danger of invasion and defeat.

This, all too briefly and in over-simplification, forms the background for the emergence of women in military service in World War II. Each of the services--Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard--knew that every man possible must be made available. Many were then performing routine jobs--jobs which could in an emergency be filled by women. All of the services, of course, had civilian employees and it was possible to obtain more. They would not, however, be susceptible to orders, to discipline, or to mobility to the same degree as women actually in military service. The Congress passed enabling legislation opening the way for women to join the military services. Hence, the formation in mid-summer 1942 of the women's branch of the Army (WAAAC, later changed to WAC), followed by the WAVES of the Navy, the SPARS of the Coast Guard, and finally the Women Reservists of the Marine Corps.

After the war I went back to the Marine Corps, from 1948 to 1953, as the first director of women in the regular establishment pursuant to the passage of legislation by the Congress which permitted women to become part of the regular establishment. I was asked to return by the Marine Corps itself. I'll get into that as we go along. But I had two tours of duty, really; the first one was my wartime three and a half years in the service and the second was from October, 1948, until April 30, 1953, when I was retired from the Marine Corps and came out to Berkeley to be Dean of Women.

I knew in 1952 that I was to be Dean of Women when I finished my Marine Corps service in 1953.



Nathan: I see, they had you lined up.

Towle: Yes, that was all settled. I had seen the then Chancellor Clark Kerr. He was in the east and had talked with me about the possibility of my returning.

The second time that I went into the service--in so-called peace time--I did not take a leave. I felt that I had no right to ask for a leave from the University so I resigned, and I had no intention, at that point, of coming back, or didn't think that I had. Fortunately, as far as my retirement was concerned, I hadn't withdrawn any of my retirement money. The records were still there. By paying in what I would have paid if I had stayed on I was able to go right ahead when I came back and be on the University rolls as though I had never been away.

Nathan: Had you any idea of how long you wanted to remain in the Marines the second time?

Towle: I knew that I would remain in the Marine Corps until 1953 because by then I would be fifty-five, which was the retirement age limit for women set by this new law. I didn't have any idea what I was going to do from there on in, but I wasn't thinking about that at that particular time. I'll explain how I happened to go into the service the second time as we go along. But I thought maybe we ought to start with my wartime service.

Wartime Service: Captain in the Marine Corps Women's Reserve

Nathan: Yes, let's start with your first tour of duty.

Towle: I think now you've got the information about the leave, the military leave.

Nathan: Right. You, then, took military leave from your job at the University Press.



Towle: Yes.

Nathan: What was your rank when you went into the service?

Towle: I was commissioned a Captain in the Marine Corps Reserve.

Nathan: Had there been a Women's Marine Corps Reserve before this?

Towle: No. There hadn't. In World War I there had been approximately one hundred or so women in both the Navy and the Marine Corps who had served in enlisted status. The Marines were called Marinettes. They served at Marine headquarters in Washington in clerical positions of one kind and another. They were in uniform, though, but there was no director of this service. They were part of the Marine Corps, but they were not organized as a reserve unit or anything of that sort. I think they served a year. Then after the war, they all went back to their civilian occupations, whatever they might have been. Many of them became civil servants working for the Marine Corps.

Nathan: So this was really a new venture, both for you and for the Corps?

Towle: It certainly was. It was a new venture--actually all the services had women's organizations during the war. The Marine Corps was the last one to form its organization.

This is not surprising because I'm sure there was a good deal of opposition to it. [Laughter] The Marine Corps couldn't see itself saddled with a lot of women. I thought that maybe it would be interesting to make a note--or a statement--here. I've been putting down some notes trying to get my thoughts organized. The year 1968 will have a special meaning for me, personally, not only as the Centennial year of the University; it also happens to be the twenty-fifth anniversary year of the formation of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. The Women's Reserve official anniversary date is February 13.



Nathan: Will there be any particular celebration?

Towle: Oh, yes. A twenty-fifth anniversary convention is to be held in San Francisco in July for four days. Marine Corps women are coming from far and near.

Nathan: That really should be fun.

Towle: Yes, I think it will be.

Of course, much has happened in my own life since that eventful day in 1943 when the Marine Corps finally--and, and as I said, reluctantly, I feel quite certain, owing to military necessity--joined the Army, the Navy, and the Coast Guard in establishing a women's organization. These other services had already established theirs in mid-1942. So they were going concerns when the Marine women's outfit was started. And we learned a good deal from the others, particularly from the WAAC, which had been the first group of women to be organized.

Nathan: That was the Women's Army Corps?

Towle: At that time it was W-A-A-C, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps. Later it was officially changed to Women's Army Corps. Of course, during World War II there was no separate Air Force. That was to come later. When I was Director of Women in the regular service, there was also a director of not only the Army and the Navy--I mean comparable directors--but also the Air Force. By that time the Air Force had been officially established.

Nathan: Had you at all thought that you might join one of the other organizations?

Towle: Yes, when things looked as dire as they did for the country in 1942. Every day you'd read about people being needed to do this and that. I had made inquiries in San Francisco at the WAVE recruiting--the Navy recruiting offices about joining the WAVES, but I hadn't done anything official about it because the other opportunity came up so soon afterwards. I was about to have my physical examination for the Navy, for the WAVES. It turned out that I took the physical examination all right; and the Navy, of



Towle: course, gave it to me because the Navy always gives physical examinations for the Marine Corps, but it was for the Marine Corps, and not for the Navy as it turned out.

The plans for the Marine Corps Women's Reserve were formulated and approved, as I've said, in early 1943. The official announcement of their formation was made on February 13. The plans called for a strength of 1,000 women officers and 18,000 enlisted women. We reached our full strength in June, 1944. Simultaneously with the announcement of the formation of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve--which we called informally MCWR--the Marine Corps announced the appointment of Ruth Cheney Streeter (Mrs. Thomas W. Streeter in civilian life, of Morristown, New Jersey) as the director, with the rank of major. That was the highest rank which women were permitted, at that time, to hold. The Navy rank, of course, was lieutenant commander; the Army and Marine Corps were major. Subsequently, as legislation permitted, she became, in turn, a lieutenant colonel and then colonel.

Seven other women from civilian life also were commissioned within those early weeks of the founding of the MCWR. Six were captains, of which I was one. And one first lieutenant, who was in the public relations office. The date of my captain's commission was February 24, 1943. Almost immediately I received my official orders at my home in Berkeley, I was living on Rose Walk at the time, to report for active duty at Marine Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C. So I had to scurry around and get myself ready to take off.

### Schools and Training

I thought it might be interesting to give a résumé of the general setup of the Women's Reserve schools and their training. During those first three months of the reserve's existence, Women Marine



Towle: reservists received their basic indoctrination at Naval training schools which had been established by the Navy for the WAVES. This, of course, saved the Marine Corps a great deal of time and effort--a great deal of time, primarily--in getting its training program underway because we were able to use the facilities of the Navy. The Marine Corps women officer candidates were trained at the U.S. Midshipmen's School for Women, Mount Holyoke, Massachusetts; and the enlisted women at the U.S. Naval Training School for Women--more familiarly known as "Hunter" because of its use of Hunter College facilities in the Bronx, New York. It was to this latter training center I received further orders almost as soon as I had set foot in the headquarters of the Marine Corps in Washington.

My assignment, in March, 1943, was that of senior woman officer on the staff of the commanding officer of the Marine detachment stationed at Hunter.

Nathan: Who trained and indoctrinated you?

Towle: That's a story in itself. No one could ever have been greener or less military than I in those early days. I even came aboard the school in my civilian clothes. My uniforms were still in the process of being tailored for me in New York. I could tie the four-in-hand uniform tie for my uniform khaki shirt, but that was about all. I was soon, however, to learn basic procedures under the kind and watchful tutelage of the Marine Corps detachment's sergeant major, a Marine of some thirty years' service. He really must have had some bad moments. [Laughter]

What you will do when you're a good Marine, is really something. Every day for the first week he would escort me to a quiet room away from curious eyes (which was just as well) and give me instructions in how to salute properly, as well as other helpful lessons on what was expected of a Marine Corps officer. [Much laughter] And I shall certainly always be grateful to Sergeant-Major McElroy--I don't remember his initials or his first name, but it doesn't matter--for helping to make a proper officer



Towle: out of me. He really personified the pride of being a Marine and he soon indoctrinated me with this same feeling. I was determined, no matter what happened, not to let him down after he had spent so much time on me, and I don't believe I really ever did.

On the day when I finally showed up at Hunter in my new uniform, everybody in the school practically, except the recruits who were in training, showed up to greet me and to welcome me aboard, even Navy Captain Amsten, who was the commanding officer of the school.

Nathan: How did you look when you were in your uniform? What was the uniform like?

Towle: Oh, I have pictures of me in uniform. I'll give you one, if you'd like one for this record.

Nathan: I'd like very much to have that.

Towle: They were very handsome uniforms. They were the forest green, like the men's, but, of course, much softer lines. Originally we wore the khaki shirt with the green uniform; then when the uniform was redesigned for peacetime use we did away with the khaki shirt and had a soft sort of green shirt, light green shirt, that went very well with the uniform. Then, of course, the distinguishing mark about women in the Marine Corps was their red scarves, the Marine Corps red. And we had caps, of course, similar to the men's, only they were styled for women--softer and all. We had a red cord above the visor.

Nathan: What did you have in the way of a dress uniform?

Towle: We had no dress uniform during the war, except that we could wear a white silk shirt, the officers could wear a white silk shirt and a green tie with the regular uniform for dress occasions. But mostly we wore our regular green service uniforms. Later on we did have dress whites. Then, eventually, we had a summer uniform; that was a long time coming, much too long when you consider the weather some of us served in for a very long time. But that



Towle: couldn't be helped. I think the Marine Corps uniform was really most attractive, and it's stood the test of time very well indeed.

Nathan: Did you have a standard purse or bag?

Towle: We had standard bags and standard shoes--at least a certain type, walking pumps. We had to wear oxfords when we were out in the field, so to speak, and the enlisted women wore oxfords with their uniforms. The officers could wear dark brown pumps with a heel that was not too high.

Nathan: And you had gloves?

Towle: Oh, yes. We had gloves, we had the works. Really, it was a stunning uniform. Fortunately it was very becoming to me.

Nathan: That helps.

Towle: Yes, it did help.

I debated a bit in my mind, when I was going over my Marine Corps service, just how much of the actual work done by the women should be gone into. I decided that, probably, this is not the time or the place to go into, at length, any of the details of the MCWR. I don't know how you feel about it. Its history has been recorded elsewhere. A recounting of its beginnings and early successes belongs really to Colonel Streeter, the original director, rather than to me. I was a member of the team, so to speak, but she was the one whose vision and leadership set the pattern, not only for the present, but for the future Women Marines organization as well.

Three years later, in 1946, while I was still on active duty during the war, I wrote an article for the Marine Corps Gazette, which was one of the official Marine Corps papers. The editors asked me to do an article in honor of the third anniversary of the MCWR, which I did. I don't know whether you'd be interested in seeing that or not. I have a copy. I can only find one copy; I think that's all I kept.



Nathan: It may be that I can take a copy of that, have that photographed, and return it to you.

Towle: It was a lead article in the Gazette that month, it was February, as it would be, to honor the women. In very much abbreviated form, it does tell what we were set up to do and what we tried to do.

Nathan: This would be of great interest. And in answer to your earlier question about how much of the detail and the organization and your impressions we want, I would say as much as possible, simply because the same events recounted from slightly different viewpoints do give depth. Although I am sure there are other accounts, and other very good accounts, there is also something that you see and can tell in your own way.

Towle: I would be glad to give--and I want to give--my own impressions and what it meant to me, for instance, personally, and the sort of outfit I think it was, and all that. But, why don't we leave it this way: why don't you look over that article and see what you think--if that in itself gives enough detail. Then that could be inserted, I suppose, or used.

Nathan: Fine. I'll be glad to read it.

Towle: My own special contributions to the Marine Corps were, I would say, to come later, when I returned in 1948 to be the first Director of Women in the regular service and the first woman colonel in the Marine Corps regular establishment. That was some time later.

Nathan: I might just ask you, briefly, what in general were the women of the corps expected to do? What was their special charge?

Towle: Our early recruiting slogan was "Free a Man to Fight!" And that's exactly what the purpose was. It was discovered that women could do so many of the jobs at Headquarters, not only at Marine Corps headquarters in Washington, but at post headquarters, which would relieve men to fight. There were clerical jobs. Many of them were very routine. Forty percent of the women were eventually assigned



Towle: to aviation posts and stations. They were Link trainers, aerologists, parachute riggers--they did all sorts of things.

Nathan: What's an aerologist?

Towle: I'm not quite sure myself. [Laughter] They went to specialist schools to learn all of these things. We had not only the basic training, eventually, but we had many specialists schools where the women were taught to do all of the things that were required in these various areas. I'm being a little vague, but this was all a long time ago.

#### Women Reservists at Camp Lejeune

Towle: I think at this juncture all I need to say is that I was very privileged and very proud to play a part, and an increasingly important one, in the development and the effectiveness of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. When the Marine Corps established its own training schools in July, 1943, all the Marine Corps personnel then moved from the Bronx, New York, where I was--and also, of course, from Mount Holyoke where the officer candidates were being trained, to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. That is a regular Marine Corps post, an enormous post, where the men were being indoctrinated for overseas duty. It was one of the large training centers on the east coast--just as San Diego and Camp Pendleton were on the west coast.

My assignment was, again, that of senior woman officer. But this time I was on the staff of the Commandant of the women's schools at Camp Lejeune. The Commandant of the schools at that time was Colonel John M. Arthur. Except for someone else who served very briefly originally, he was the Commandant for practically the whole time the schools were in operation. I remained with the women's training program for about, I guess, four or five



Towle: months. I've forgotten the exact dates. Then the commanding general, General John Marston, the commanding general of Camp Lejeune itself, of the post, requested that I be assigned as a member of his staff to advise him on matters pertaining to women reservists. You see, by that time a great many women had been assigned to more or less permanent jobs on the post. So that was my function for several months.

I remained in that position until I received orders in September, 1944, assigning me to duty in the office of the director of the MCWR at headquarters, Washington, D.C.

Nathan: Your range kept expanding, then.

Towle: Yes, it did.

I would like to say here, just parenthetically, that it was a most interesting experience to be on a large Marine Corps post, especially in wartime, where there was so much activity going on and where you felt that you really were a part of a very important operation. Of course, we were a very small part of it, needless to say. One reason the Marine Corps decided to have the women trained on a Marine Corps post was so that they could be where they could have weapons demonstrations and things of that sort, to see what the men were doing when they went overseas, and this had a very salutary effect on the training program. It made it more interesting, for one thing; it made the women feel that they really were sharing much more directly in the war effort.

Nathan: I'm wondering how much contact you had with the women who were in training.

Towle: I had quite a lot of contact with the women, actually, but I was not a commanding officer. They had their own commanding officers, women officers, as they were assigned their duty stations. On almost all posts and stations there was a woman commanding officer who was charged directly with administering the affairs for the enlisted women, but I was more or less in an advisory capacity, in



Towle: a staff specialist capacity. I was never what is known as a line officer, which is giving commands.

Nathan: So there is a difference between the staff and the line.

Towle: Oh, yes. There's a line officer, a staff officer, and then a sort of a specialist officer who may be assigned to the quartermaster, or ordnance, or something of that sort. Certainly my position was always one of staff relationship.

Nathan: So that would mean, then, that your working relationships were really with other officers?

Towle: Yes, they were usually with the commanding officer or the commanding general, whoever it was, of the post or station, where I happened to be.

Nathan: Did you ever have any feeling that it was sort of a special task to establish yourself in the eyes of the men officers, or didn't this question arise?

Towle: Oh, yes, it arose. It arose as a general thing at the beginning. We weren't wholeheartedly accepted, let's face it. I personally never felt it particularly, but it took a while for the men to accept us--especially some of the old-time Marines. Many of the young men who were being trained--well, for instance, I can think of Camp Lejeune; at the beginning, the women were resented by some of the men who were there, about to go out to the Pacific and all. But this didn't last long. I think it was just that they didn't know what the women were there to do; they thought it was pretty funny, also. Here were these women wearing Marine Corps uniforms, and what [laughter] was it all about? That feeling didn't last long, and I don't know of any service that was prouder than the Marine Corps of its women and what they accomplished.

Nathan: Are you going to be talking about how the women were recruited?

Towle: I hadn't thought of this particularly.

Nathan: I might just ask this, perhaps, as a little background.



Towle: Yes.

Nathan: Did you have certain recruitment standards for different levels?

Towle: Women who enlisted had to be at least twenty years old and high school graduates; officer candidates, between twenty-one and thirty-five, with at least two years of college or its equivalent. They could not have children under eighteen. Colonel Streeter had a fifteen year old daughter so she had to have a waiver of this requirement.

We never had any trouble meeting quotas. We did have very good publicity. Of course, there was resistance on the part of the public, as you possibly know, to women going into the services at all. Some people felt women hadn't any business being there, but I think it didn't take too long for the American public to realize that the country needed every man it could get to go out to fight. Really, it was as simple as that. The women were qualified to do many of the jobs at home which the men had been doing and there was no reason why they shouldn't be trained to do them. My own belief is that women should participate actively in a national emergency. I hadn't thought of it particularly before I was in the service. I came out of the service believing firmly that in any national emergency the women should be called on to serve, I don't mean in battle, not on the firing line, but to do their share of whatever they could do, wherever their talents lay and wherever they were needed.

As I look back on those wartime years, I would like to mention a few things that I've thought about. I have many memories of events and episodes and people, and they will always have a special place in my thoughts. One thing stands out in particular: the feeling of complete commitment with which everyone, man and woman, accepted whatever they were given to do and whatever was expected of him or her. For instance, for most of the women in uniform the sense of sharing in a national crisis had a profound effect on them personally. I know it did on me, and I think I



Towle: wasn't any different from a great many others. Swayed primarily by patriotic reasons, women joined the Marine Corps, as I said before, to carry out that early MCWR recruiting slogan "Free a Man to Fight." How well they performed their mission is attested to by the official records. I think the Marine Corps justifiably has always been very proud of what they did then and did later. Few jobs could really be called glamorous and many of them were monotonously routine. When I think of that awful weather of that first summer, in 1943, at Camp Lejeune--you know, in the lowlands of North Carolina, I think there were many of us who wondered what fate had brought us there. [Laughter] We stuck it out. Then, of course, as things got better and accommodations for the women were finished and their summer uniforms were ready, things looked a little brighter, and the women never wavered as far as doing their jobs was concerned. One couldn't help but be awfully proud of them.

Another thing which I shall always remember was how little we really knew about each other and how little it really mattered. It was months before I knew the background of many of the officers with whom I lived (we had barracks assigned to us, where the officers lived).

Nathan: About how many were there?

Towle: I think there were around 125 at one time. Backgrounds just didn't matter. It was kind of interesting later on to find what they had done in civilian life. But I think in this complete acceptance of one another, there's a lesson there of some sort for a lot of people.

Nathan: Were the barracks just big rooms in which you had a bed and a footlocker?

Towle: For the junior officers, the second lieutenants and the first lieutenants, yes, but they each had a single bed, a chest of drawers for every two persons, and an assigned place in these long barracks. They had been men's barracks and had been turned over to the women. They had fixed them up, and I must say that some of them became quite attractive--especially



Towle: after the woman's touch was added. Because I was a senior officer, I and another captain (junior to me) shared what had been an NCO [non-commissioned officer] suite. There was a bedroom on each side and a bathroom in the middle--shower and the rest of the facilities between us; this was really deluxe.

Nathan: Do you remember the name of the other captain?

Towle: Oh, yes. Captain Grace Cotton, from Minneapolis. She was a buyer for one of the big department stores there--one of the best-known ones. She was a graduate of the University of Minnesota. She had been one of the first officers to go down to Camp Lejeune to help get things ready before the women moved in. I think the Marine Corps sent down about six or seven officers ahead of time and Captain Cotton was the senior one to go down. She and I became good friends, and she and I shared those quarters. But we all lived together and ate our meals in the women's mess hall. We didn't have anything fancy.

Nathan: Did you get acquainted with the men officers at all?

Towle: Yes, we got acquainted with the men. It didn't take long. Of course, we were a curiosity when we first went there, but the women officers were all entitled to the privileges of the Marine Corps officers' club--if you could find somebody who had enough gas to get you there. [Laughter] I finally broke down at Camp Lejeune and bought myself a second-hand car from a young man who was shipping out. It was a funny old sedan, but at least it went, and it was a godsend to the women officers. I had just enough gas ration of my own to get around the post. We were all, as you recall, rationed in those days. You probably don't recall much of it.

Nathan: Oh, yes indeed. I was plenty old enough to recall the whole thing.

Towle: Well, anyway, life on a post was quite different, and I'm so glad I had both experiences. I was on one of the really important and big Marine Corps



Towle: posts for about fourteen months.

Nathan: That's quite a contrast to Miss Ransom's school.

Towle: Quite a contrast, yes. I loved every minute of it, too. My suite-mate in the barracks, Captain Cotton, had gone through officer training. She was a lieutenant when I went down to Camp Lejeune, and was later promoted to captain. She had been in the first class of officer training at Holyoke, so she knew what it was all about. She was a commanding officer actually, and could take her troops out and parade them up and down and knew how to give commands and knew what to do. Of course, I never did any of that. I learned how to take a review. There's nothing very difficult about standing and saluting at the proper time when the troops march past. I will have to confess that I always felt at something of a disadvantage. This was my own feeling. I don't think anybody else thought I was at a disadvantage because I hadn't had basic training, and I took pains not to show my meager knowledge of military customs and procedures.

Nathan: Was there a manual, so that you could quickly bone up?

Towle: Yes, but I relied mostly on asking male officers, who were awfully nice. They were as eager to have me do things properly as I was to do them. I never hesitated to ask about things or what I should do. I think they appreciated the fact that--after all, how could we know all these things? We weren't even ninety day wonders. We were just wonders that we ever made it at all. [Laughter]

I said it really didn't matter to us who we were or what our backgrounds were or anything else. The only thing that counted--and this is really true--was whether we were doing our jobs well. This is something we all felt profoundly about, and we just accepted each other as comrades and fellow Marines. We were bound together, of course, by this very important common purpose in which we were engaged.



Towle: One thing worth mentioning that I had forgotten earlier was General Vandegrift's statement (he was then the Commandant) on the first anniversary of the MCWR that the Sixth Marine Corps Division could not have been formed had the women not been available to fill stateside jobs in comparable numbers.

Classified Status for Colonel Streeter's Book

Nathan: Could we talk a little about the book that you and Colonel Streeter wrote? Was it shortly after she retired?

Towle: It was her book really. She wrote it in 1945 when we both were at Marine Corps headquarters. I helped her a bit and gave a few suggestions, but she did the writing of it. It was a history of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve.

Nathan: Did it have a title, or was that it?

Towle: That was it.

Nathan: History of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve.

Towle: During World War II, 1943 to 1945. She left on December 7, 1945, so this was done before then. This was her final report to the Marine Corps, in a sense. It was quite a thick book. It wasn't printed. It was mimeographed, or what-do-you call it?

Nathan: Duplicated somehow?

Towle: That's right. It was a very thorough history, thorough in the sense that it took up everything. It took up recruitment and it took up the types of jobs that women held. It was a critique, really, of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. It was just that so it was no holds barred. She made certain



Towle: comments about the setup as a whole and about some of the weaknesses of the structure. She stressed the good points but she also stressed some of the difficulties, the problems that the women had beginning this whole venture. Then there was the section on discipline and how well--mostly how well--the women fitted into the military life. But there were also, obviously, going to be some misfits. She commented on these--not by name, of course, but on the general situation, how some people just can't take this kind of life for one reason or another. Of course, this has been true since the beginning of time, people going into the services, but it's interesting to observe how the women reacted. By and large the women did wonderfully well because they were really motivated by a feeling of patriotism and a feeling that the country needed them, a feeling which now, I think, is lacking. This is understandable. There's no urgency about going into the services now.

Now young girls and young women, and I understand this perfectly, don't want to tie themselves up for a specific length of time because this interferes with their plans for marriage and many other plans that they may have. So there's not, I think, a particularly enthusiastic response, although the Marine Corps has done very well in its officer training program. It has kept up with its needs. It has had good people in it, and the women have served faithfully their two years in the reserve, as they are required to do as second lieutenants. Some of them have applied for regular commissions, but I think there aren't as many doing it now as there used to be. They maintain their reserve status, but they go inactive after their two years of required active duty--which is all very understandable.

Nathan: Oh, yes, and in the book that you were writing together, this of course didn't come out.

Towle: That hadn't occurred yet, you see. To get back to the book. I must emphasize again that it's really Colonel Streeter's book, it's not mine. I was there and I enjoyed working on it, and I gave some suggestions, but it's written by her in quite a frank, breezy style. Then, of course, after having



Towle: done all this-- [Laughter] we thought it would just be sent around within Marine Corps headquarters. It was sent to various people--the Commandant, of course, was sent the first copy, or at least he was sent a copy of her original transcript. Everyone was awfully interested in it, there was no question about this, terribly interested in it, and it was a very helpful kind of document. It might not be so helpful now because it's gotten outdated after twenty-five years, or at least twenty-three. But we had assumed, also, that it would be available to probably a lot of the women, themselves, to read. At least the women officers who were in positions of command, like the commanding officers, would have a chance to see what some of the problems had been. This was when it became classified.

Nathan: Now, who would classify it?

Towle: Headquarters.

Nathan: Marine Headquarters?

Towle: Certainly. The Commandant's office, I think. They decided this was a fine documentation. They were delighted to have it. But they didn't want to take a chance that people on the outside might read it. They were going to keep it to themselves. So it was classified. You had to have permission to get access to it.

Nathan: Were there any copies around that didn't get called in? Is there a living copy of this?

Towle: I really don't know. I had a part of one once, but it was not the final copy. We were very careful not to do things that we weren't supposed to. I wished afterward I had filched one.

Colonel Streeter is a very entertaining person under any circumstance. Some of her comments in the book were very amusing. We used to laugh ourselves silly about it being classified because we never could see why. [Laughter] They wouldn't even give her a copy to take home.

Nathan: That is marvelous.



Towle: Isn't that killing! Later the historical section of the Marine Corps did do a history of the Marine Corps Reserve and in it they did a chapter on the women and their contribution, not only during World War II, but as reservists since then. It does not have the pithiness and the first-hand effect that Colonel Streeter's did. Pretty dull, really.

Nathan: Is her book still classified now, as far as you know?

Towle: I don't know. I haven't seen it for the last twenty-three years.

Nathan: That's why we need some of your pithy comments, because some of the pithiest things get lost otherwise.

#### Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel and Director

Nathan: Yes, now, let's see.... We got you onto the staff of General...

Towle: Marston, yes. I was at Camp Lejeune all together about fourteen months. Then I received orders to proceed to Washington for duty in the office of the director of the MCWR, Colonel Streeter, and I was assigned as assistant director when I got there.

There, again, I don't know how much you want me to go into detail of the various things that we did at that time.

Nathan: I think it would be of interest.

Towle: Fine, I can do that.

It really was very stimulating and exciting, and I will try to bring that out. I was just going to say that at last VE (Victory in Europe) and VJ (Victory in Japan) days came and went and thankfully



Towle: the war was drawing to a close. Colonel Streeter requested release from active duty as of December 7, 1945, so that she might be at home when her three sons, who had served all during the war on active duty, were then also about to return to civilian life. She felt that she wanted to be home, that she was needed at home. So she requested release from active duty.

She had also started the MCWR demobilization plans. Upon her recommendation the Commandant of the Marine Corps, who was then General A. A. Vandegrift, concurred, and I was designated director of MCWR to succeed her. On December 7, 1945, the day that Colonel Streeter was detached from Headquarters, Marine Corps--as we say--or went inactive, I was elevated to colonel. My own rank, my previous rank, had been lieutenant colonel.

Nathan: That's rather an elevated rank, isn't it?

Towle: It is a rather elevated rank, yes. There were just two of us at the time. I helped to guide the destinies of the MCWR in those closing months and during that period of demobilization. I served as the second wartime director until June 15, 1946, when, for all practical purposes, demobilization--the plans which had occupied much of my time and thought those last six months--had been accomplished. And I felt that I was no longer needed at headquarters, so I requested inactive status.

Nathan: When you speak of demobilization, does this mean that there were no women left in uniform, essentially?

Towle: When I left headquarters there were still some there, but they were going to be phased out gradually. At least this was the idea. It didn't turn out that way, but that was the idea then. Later there was a small group of women kept on duty right straight along at Headquarters, Marine Corps because they were needed there and the Marine Corps decided that they wanted to keep a few women in uniform. Also, the discussion was beginning to take place as to whether or not women should be admitted into the regular services. So there was



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commanding

LIEUTENANT COLONEL KATHERINE A. TOWLE,  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS WOMEN'S RESERVE,

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For meritorious service during the entire period of the growth and development of the United States Marine Corps Women's Reserve. She was at once placed in a position of responsibility and succeeding assignments have broadened her field of usefulness. She has constantly demonstrated superior qualities of judgment, tact and leadership and has commanded the respect and confidence of her colleagues. By her outstanding performance of duty, Lieutenant Colonel Towle has contributed greatly to the development of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. Her conduct was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

A copy of this citation has been made a part of Lieutenant Colonel Towle's official record and she is hereby authorized to wear the Commendation Ribbon.

/s/ JAMES FORRESTAL

Secretary of the Navy

OFFICIAL  
COPY

[1945]



Towle: never complete demobilization. But in mid-1946 there was a very, very small group of women on duty at headquarters.

Nathan: Then, I'm assuming that the women shared in the benefits such as the GI Bill.

Towle: Oh, yes, yes indeed. They were all advised as to their rights and privileges in our demobilization centers. Many of them took advantage of the GI Bill. It was very interesting. For many of the women, one of the things they wanted to do more than anything else, was to go into personnel work. This was particularly true of some of the officers, who had had command experience and therefore close relationships with enlisted women and with looking after their welfare and all that sort of thing. You'd be surprised at how many deans of women came out of wartime service. Many of them went back to college and got at least master's degrees. Some finished college. A lot of the enlisted women took college work, who had really not planned to take it before. We had many women, both officers and enlisted, who had had some college. Some of them had not graduated, or they wanted to pursue further academic work, and the GI Bill of Rights gave them that opportunity. They had exactly the same privileges as the men in that respect.

Nathan: Can you tell a bit more about Washington during the war? You had no barracks in Washington, did you?

Towle: No, we were given quarters allowance. I sublet a small apartment on--guess what!--California Street. A very cute apartment. I lived there the last year and a half of my wartime service. Then I wrote to Mrs. Brereton, whose apartment it was, when I knew I was going back to the Marine Corps in 1948, and asked her if I could have the apartment again; she let me have it for about eight months, until I found another place. She was awfully nice about it; she knew I was just crazy about the apartment. It was a little tiny bit of a place, but it was very attractive. It was furnished, of course, and very convenient. It was near the Brighton Hotel, where Colonel Streeter lived during the war; that was on



Towle: California Street down the street away. Across from her lived General and Mrs. Denig. He was a retired brigadier general. He had been in the Marine Corps many years and was recalled for active duty to head up the public relations division at headquarters. Colonel Streeter had her car. It was a little one-seater Plymouth. We used to tool over to Headquarters, Marine Corps in that. She could have my share of gas, and she had hers; then General Denig supplied the reserve parking space in the compound because he was entitled to one as a general officer. You see the Marine Corps headquarters was in the Navy annex across the river, above the Arlington Cemetery. The three of us almost always went to and from Marine Corps Headquarters together. General Denig was very plump, and Colonel Streeter was not exactly what you'd call thin.

Nathan: Was she tall?

Towle: No, she is kind of short and stocky. At that time I was fairly willowy. So we all fitted in very neatly. I would sit in the middle, Colonel Streeter would drive, and General Denig would sit on the right side. I remember we removed the armrest. Remember, the old cars had a rest here for your arm?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: We took that off so we could all fit in more comfortably.

Nathan: You couldn't possibly salute, could you?

Towle: [Laughter] No.

Nathan: Do you salute sitting down?

Towle: The Marine Corps doesn't ever salute sitting down. Once in a while we got caught going into headquarters when they were putting up the colors. Then we would get out of the car and stand at attention and salute. But we didn't have to salute sitting down, no. That was just a little sidelight.



Nathan: It was amusing to think about it.

How did your duties change when you went from Camp Lejeune to Washington?

Towle: I assisted in whatever Colonel Streeter was working on at the moment. Also, I remained at Headquarters more or less to carry on the office when she was away on temporary duty, as she often was, visiting posts and stations where Marine women were on duty. She did a great deal of traveling, and I kept the office going and kept the paperwork under control. It was that sort of thing. It was administrative, more or less.

Nathan: Was there a great volume of correspondence?

Towle: Yes. Many things came across our desks which we didn't actually have to do very much about, but we were supposed to know about them. You'd be surprised how many times our initials would appear on a memorandum of some sort. It was very interesting to be at Headquarters. The men couldn't have been nicer to us. They were very much interested in what the women were doing, especially in the field. And by that time, of course, everyone was most enthusiastic about the work that the women were performing.

Nathan: Did you have the feeling that you and Colonel Streeter had a fairly free hand in running the womens corps, or didn't it work that way?

Towle: No, we didn't have a free hand. [Laughter] As we learned. For instance, Colonel Streeter was directly responsible to the officer--he was then a colonel, after a brigadier general--who was in charge of personnel.

Nathan: For everyone?

Towle: For Headquarters, yes. In wartime it worked all right. But we never had direct access, for instance, to the Commandant. We always went through somebody else. When I was asked to go back in 1948, when General Cates approached me about returning to the Marine Corps to head up the women in the regular



Towle: service--I was reluctant at first to do so.

As I indicated earlier, I talked with him first in San Francisco. He came out on a visit to western posts and stations. When he was in San Francisco, he asked me to come over to see him. Then I corresponded with him. Then finally I went back, obviously. But I made it very clear to him that I felt that there should be a change in the general setup as far as the women and the director's responsibilities to the Commandant were concerned, and this was done.

I became a member of the Commandant's general staff when I went back in 1948, just like the other heads of departments. They were all generals except myself; I was a colonel. We had weekly meetings, for instance, with the Commandant, weekly briefing sessions at which I would be the only woman, of course. But this relationship was very helpful. You see, it put the women on the same basis as other departments of the Marine Corps. Both Colonel Streeter and I had discussed this before we had ever thought about a permanent organization of any kind. But we felt that this was important. The more I stayed at Headquarters--I mean that last six months or so during demobilization--the more I was firmly convinced. This is not to say that we weren't given every consideration, but it just meant one more in the chain of command. It wouldn't have worked nearly so well in peacetime if it hadn't been reorganized to have the director responsible, as were all the other heads of departments, directly to the Commandant.

Nathan: So the administrative structure really had a great deal to do with effectiveness.

Towle: Personally I think it did. Of course, in wartime, when we were all so new, I can see how the original setup happened and was probably necessary, because we had to have somebody to guide us. Fortunately we had a fine man: Brigadier General L.W.T. Waller, Jr.; he died just a few months ago.

Nathan: And the other one was General...?



Towle: Cates, Clifton Cates. He was the Commandant at the time I went back. He succeeded General Vandegrift as Commandant. He was in office when women became part of the regular restablishment. I'll go into that a little later on.

Nathan: While you were in Washington had the total number of women in the Marine Corps increased? This was still the reserve, wasn't it?

Towle: Oh, yes. This was the reserve, all the way through the war, yes.

Nathan: Had the 18,000 limit increased?

Towle: No, it was that. Of course, at times it went over that because it naturally would. But I think our greatest strength, enlisted women and officers, at any one time went up to 18,838, or something near that. The Marine Corps never had any trouble recruiting women. It appealed to women.

Nathan: It's always been somewhat of an elite group.

Towle: That's right, and, of course, you have to remember it was relatively small. The women's organization of the Coast Guard which was called the SPARS, were small like the Marine Corps. I'm not sure their strength was even as large as ours, but it was certainly no more. I believe the Navy had 100,000 at one time, and the Army had over 300,000. I have forgotten the exact figures. But it does make a difference when you're dealing with a very small group. It was in proportion to what the Marine Corps itself was, as far as the number was concerned, but we were very fortunate in never having difficulty in getting recruits.

Nathan: The Marine Corps always had volunteers, too, didn't it?

Towle: Oh, yes. Of course, all the women were volunteers in all the services.

Nathan: Yes, I was thinking of the Marine Corps itself.

Towle: I think during the war there were some who were drafted. I'm not absolutely certain. I think there



Towle: were during the Korean War, but again I'm not absolutely certain of that either. Of course, I served during the Korean War, during and after. We didn't call it a war. We called it a "conflict." That was in 1951, wasn't it? '52, somewhere along in there. Then, of course, for me working with Colonel Streeter, as I did for that year and a half, on matters relating to the women's reserve--was an unexpected bonus. She was a wonderful person to work with. She was, and is, an amazing woman. She has great vitality, imagination, and administrative ability coupled with absolute integrity, a wonderfully refreshing, down-to-earth approach and a sense of humor. The Marine Corps Women's Reserve consistently reflected her own high standards of achievement--her enthusiasm, dedication, and leadership. She was never afraid to ask for anything she felt was desirable for the women and for the success of the program. She was batted down sometimes; we all used to laugh about this, because the Marine Corps just couldn't see its way clear to do this, that or the other thing, or they didn't understand just why this seemed important. But everyone at Headquarters was devoted to her and thought she was a wonderful person, which she was. Wonderful for the Marine Corps, and for the women's unit.

Nathan: What were some of the things that she wanted to get for the women?

Towle: After we had been going for a couple of years or so, she was anxious to have refresher courses for some of the officers. She felt that they needed this. Well, to the Marine Corps this was a frill, and they didn't think this was necessary, so they turned thumbs down on the idea. There were various things. I think there were also questions, sometimes, about the living accommodations; she had ideas about wanting certain things for them which the Marine Corps felt were not possible at that particular time. But I must say that by and large most of her recommendations, I mean the basic recommendations, were always accepted. They always didn't jell immediately. She was very persuasive and she was not afraid to speak her piece.



Directors for the Women's Services

Nathan: After she went home and saw her sons reestablished, do you know what she did later?

Towle: Oh, yes, I hear from her. We're great friends. She was involved, before she went into the Marine Corps, in all sorts of things. She never had a paying job; she had been involved in all sorts of volunteer things in the state of New Jersey. Of those original four directors, she was the only one who hadn't been in a profession or business or something of that sort.

Oveta Culp Hobby, the Director of the Women's Army Corps, was a newspaper woman, and had been for many years. Mildred McAfee, the Director of the WAVES [Navy], was president of Wellesley College, on leave. Dorothy Stratton, who was then head of the SPARS [Coast Guard], was Dean of Women at Purdue University. They were all more or less professional women. But Colonel Streeter had something that the rest of them didn't have, just because she happened to be the sort of person she is. This was a down-to-earth quality in her perceptiveness, her understanding. She has great understanding of people. She has four children of her own; they are all married now and have slew of children. I don't know how many grandchildren she has. I lost track.

Nathan: Her role was more a volunteer than a professional?

Towle: Oh, yes, that's right. She held a commercial pilot's license. She had hoped to get into the WASPS. She had her own plane. She went to night school at New York University to get her pilot's license, but the WASPS wouldn't take her because she was too old. [Laughter] I think she was forty-five, and they insisted on their members being younger.

Nathan: That's priceless.

Towle: Isn't that wonderful? But she wasn't too old for



Towle: the Marine Corps, and they were certainly lucky to have her. I think it also might be noted at this juncture, that the Marine Corps preferred not to have a professional woman because no profession per se trained women for military service. It thought a volunteer would have less to unlearn and could be more easily trained to military procedures. The Marine Corps really couldn't have found a better person to head its women's component.

Nathan: Do you know how they chose her?

Towle: Yes. General Waller, he was then Colonel Waller, had been brought back for duty. He was a reservist, and was recalled to active duty by the Marine Corps, as were a great many officers. Previously, he had served a long time in the Marine Corps and was thoroughly familiar with it. He and Major Rhoads were friends, and Major Rhoads became General Walker's assistant at Headquarters. Mr. Basil O'Conner had been a partner of Mr. Streeter's at one time, in the practice of law, and later had been a law partner of Mr. Roosevelt's before he became President. Mr. Streeter was, at the time, retired. I think Mr. O'Conner had been approached by Major Rhoads, who had been a classmate of his at Harvard Law School, and asked if he had any suggestions. It was Mr. O'Conner who mentioned Mrs. Streeter to Major Rhoads and said that he thought she might be a very likely candidate. And that's how it came about. It also turned out that she did know Secretary Knox, who was then Secretary of the Navy, but the Marine Corps did not know this until it had decided itself to select her.

All the services obtained their directors in much the same way--inquiring around as to who might be available and who might be a likely choice. I'm not sure how President McAfee was approached to be head of the WAVES. These were handled individually by each of the services. I know that Mrs. Hobby, first head of the WAC, had worked with the Army in some civilian capacity, and they knew her, and, of course, her newspaper work brought her in contact with many people.



Nathan: So, in a sense, it was just a chain of acquaintance.

Towle: Yes, it was; I think you could say that about all of the first directors. By the time I went back to Washington in 1948, the second set of directors was in office: Colonel Mary Halloran of the WAC; Captain Joy Hancock of the WAVES; and Colonel Geraldine May of the WAF [Air Force]. By this time the Air Force had been separated from the Army. And then I for the Marines.

We were chosen by our respective services presumably because of our demonstrated ability to do well in military life, not "by guess and by God," as Colonel Streeter used to say about the first directors. This was a somewhat self-deprecating remark, but I suppose there is some element of truth in it. We worked together closely on matters which pertained to the women in the services, just as the original four directors had.

Nathan: Did you feel that you got to know your opposite numbers quite well?

Towle: Oh, yes. And when I went back in 1948, Mrs. Anna Rosenberg became Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower). She was very much interested in the women in uniform. We had many conferences with her, and used to go to the Pentagon to her office quite often. Then, she set up a civilian advisory committee known as DACOWITS--Defense Advisory Committee for Women in the Services. It is still in existence. The directors were ex-officio members, actually, of the committee. We always attended the meetings. It was a group of civilian women who visited posts and stations and presented their ideas or comments to Mrs. Rosenberg. We got them whatever information they desired, and saw to it that they visited wherever they wanted to.

Nathan: Was there any personal quality that was common among this group of military women that you could identify?

Towle: If so, I would find it difficult to define. We all had to have administrative abilities, there's no question about that. But, then, lots of people have



Towle: administrative ability. I think it was necessary, too, that you fitted well into your own particular service. You had to have the confidence of the men with whom you worked.

Nathan: Adaptability?

Towle: Adaptability was a very important characteristic, or need, certainly. For me, it was possibly easier to get to know more people at my headquarters than it might have been for some of the others because, there again, we were small. On the other hand, Captain Joy Hancock had worked for the Navy as a civilian for many, many years; she knew all the "brass" in the Navy, so she had no difficulty finding her way around.

Nathan: In your own personal experience, what did you think helped you the most in the Marine Corps service?

Towle: I don't know that there was any special thing. Always, I liked what I was doing, I believed in what I was doing, I felt it was important. I certainly was accepted wholeheartedly by the Marine Corps. This all helps, you know.

Nathan: I remember one of those pictures. You certainly looked marvelous in that uniform. I think that must do something for morale.

Towle: I think it does, too. I'd like to include at least one picture of myself in uniform as long as this [memoir] is to have some pictorial embellishment. But it's hard to pinpoint things that were most helpful.

Nathan: Your enthusiasm and sense of commitment are probably personal qualities.

Towle: Well, I think so, probably. During the war certainly. Now this wasn't so true in 1948 to 1953 because there was not the national crisis. Later, you didn't join the services primarily for patriotic reasons. This was the difference between wartime and peacetime service. Certainly during World War II there was this feeling on the part of everyone, I feel quite certain, of commitment, which can do a great deal for a person.



Nathan: You were suggesting that the sense of commitment and the sense of participation and the sense of acceptance...?

Towle: Yes, the participation and the sharing, and then the acceptance.

Nathan: It would be nice if these qualities were carryovers into ordinary times.

Towle: Actually, when I came back to the University in 1953 to be Dean of Women, I certainly carried enthusiasm for what I was doing. This was the civilian job I wanted more than anything else. I always have been--apparently--committed to the University. There have been moments I wondered why. [Laughter]

Nathan: Affection needs no reasons, after all.

Towle: Yes, I know, it gets under your skin. And after thirty-five years--more than that, really, if you count my undergraduate years--this is a long time, in a fairly long life, to have a commitment, or to be associated with anything as closely as I have been with the University. I think some of those same qualities--maybe they are basic, personal qualities in a way, but I didn't feel that particularly when we were in the service. I hadn't stopped to think about it in those terms.

Nathan: This may be laboring it a little bit, to look for this quality in the whole life of the community. I was thinking of the alienation people speak of with respect to other institutions.

Towle: I never had the feeling of alienation at the University, ever. I'm sorry that students feel that now, or at least that is one of the things that is said about students. I don't know how much they actually feel it. Sometimes I think that people search for things to account for the way people behave, or act, or something, that maybe aren't there at all. But, for myself, I never had any feeling of alienation. I guess I just don't know what it is to be alienated because I never



Towle: happened to be in that kind of situation. I guess I'm fortunate.

Nathan: This plunge into the military life must have taken tremendous adaptability.

Towle: I think it did. And some, of course, reacted better than others. By and large, however, almost everyone in those early wartime years could adapt to whatever they were expected to do. And we had practically no discipline problems, as such.

Nathan: Yes, I wondered about that.

Towle: There were a few, of course, yes. You have to expect it when you're dealing with some 19,000 women. We had more disciplinary problems, I suppose, in those five years later on when I went back, in proportion--but the thing in wartime was that you were doing this because you had a strong sense of wanting to do it and believing in it. Nobody was obligated to volunteer to go into the services during the war. But everybody who did had the feeling that she was needed and wanted. This made it a unique kind of experience. To be sure, some couldn't take it, but there weren't many of those.

Nathan: You had a number drop out?

Towle: Yes, and there were some medical discharges. But there were relatively few. I don't remember how many now. In that famous book that Colonel Streeter wrote, we had statistics. I can't refer to that unfortunately, as I don't have a copy!

I think I've given you the impression that I intended to; that my wartime service was really one of the highlights of my career. And I venture to add (in true Marine fashion, I might add) in a not undistinguished career.

Nathan: Very well put.

Towle: I shall always be thankful to Dean Mary B. Davidson, Dean of Women emeritus, that she saw in me a potential Marine when she was approached early in



Towle: 1943 by Colonel Brewster Rhoads of the Marine Corps for recommendations as to likely women officer candidates for the then newly-formed Marine Corps Women's Reserve. And to the Marine Corps itself I shall never cease being grateful for the unique opportunity I was given for service and for personal growth and development. I came out of my wartime service much more of a person than when I came in.

Nathan: What sort of things did you feel had changed?

Towle: In the first place, this was the first time I had the feeling that I was doing an unusual job and was left alone to do it. It was wonderful to have the confidence of the Marine Corps for the job I was doing. This was very important to me.

Nathan: Yes, I suppose you had worked very closely with colleagues in the past.

Towle: Oh, yes. I'm not in any way belittling any of the things that I did before, but they were not, as this really was, a top job. I was to go on to a top job in the Marine Corps, certainly, when I went back as a director in the regular establishment. There was no question, then, of my position or of my standing at Headquarters, Marine Corps. I was invited back.

Nathan: And on your own terms.

Towle: And on my own terms more or less.

Nathan: This assumption of practically sole responsibility really did something.

Towle: Yes, it really did.

Nathan: And, of course, it turned out that you measured up to it. It must have been gratifying.

Towle: Yes, it was. But, you know, sometimes the two things don't always go together. I suppose that's one reason that I'm very proud of my Marine Corps service, both in wartime and later in peacetime, and why I feel it did teach me many things.



Towle: You know, we were talking last time about Oliver Wendell Holmes?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: I found the quotation. Right here I'd like to say that my service in the Marine Corps did provide me with an unexpected and rare opportunity to be, as Oliver Wendell Holmes implied so many years ago, to be a part of my times. And this is what he wrote:--he didn't write it at that particular time, he said this as he went off to join the Union forces in the Civil War: "Life is action and passion, therefore it is required of a man that he should share the action and passion of his time at the peril of being judged not to have lived." This comes right straight out of A Yankee from Olympus. I can even get you the page number. I got so fascinated looking it up I practically read the whole book again.

Nathan: That's the Catherine Bowen book, isn't it?

Towle: Yankee from Olympus, that was it. These remarks of his will always have special significance to me because of my wartime service--of my own record.

In this connection, I should like to say one more thing about military service. I know it has become increasingly unpopular to give military personnel, to give the military service, credit for anything, despite the fact that in a real crisis the armed forces are immediately called upon for action and protection, by civilians throughout the land. But this current attitude of rejection and belittlement, it seems to me, is as ridiculous as it is untenable. To play down everything that has something to do with the military just doesn't hold any water as far as I'm concerned. No one is more opposed to war than most of those who have served in one. Admittedly women in wartime did not, and probably never will, face real danger as do the men of the country, but I know of no service woman who is not opposed to war per se. After every war or military engagement one hopes and prays that some day we will really find the key to lasting peace.



Towle: As for our present engagement in Vietnam, I hold no brief whatsoever. I think we have no business being there; I never have. Our own national survival is not at stake, and we are not called upon to be our brother's keeper. In short, we shouldn't be there, and the loss of human life is as unnecessary as it is tragic. Nothing can ever adequately compensate for it.

But this still does not alter the fact that during World War II and the Korean conflict, our nation was in trouble, really in deep trouble, and the men in uniform, and the women too recognized this. And like good citizen soldiers they performed their assigned tasks willingly and unselfishly. This was a mark, I submit, of maturity and responsibility all too often lacking in every day life and action. Separated the men from the boys, as it were. I feel very strongly about this, and about belittling the job the men in Vietnam are doing even if one finds the conflict unsupportable.

#### Inactive Status and the Campus Again

Nathan: When did you leave military service?

Towle: I went inactive in June, 1946--inactive from military service--and put my uniforms in mothballs; it never occurred to me that I'd be going back into them again. As I think I noted somewhere else, my World War II experience had been a deeply satisfying one in every way and one in which I took quite a lot of pride. I had done a good job for the Marine Corps and, of course, for the country. This is where I'd like to find my letter of commendation from the U.S. Navy because I think it fits about in here. It indicates the basis on which I was given this recognition. Well, anyway, the war was over and for those of us who had gone into the Marine Corps for the particular purpose of helping out during the national emergency, our mission had been



Towle: accomplished. I felt that it was time for me, certainly, to get on with my civilian career. Before I left Washington I had been corresponding with Mr. Farquhar at the University Press--because I was still on leave from the press, officially.

Nathan: Was this Samuel?

Towle: Yes, Samuel T. Farquhar, the same one. And also with Dr. Deutsch, who was then Vice-President of the University and Provost at Berkeley, whom I had known over the years, not very closely, but I had known him a long time and we were good friends. My old job at the press was waiting for me, I knew that. But both Dr. Deutsch and Mr. Farquhar realized that I would like to get more into the swim of academic life. My three and a half years in the Marine Corps had given me a renewed interest in and a desire to work more closely with people, and especially with students.

Dr. Deutsch understood perfectly my feeling about wanting to be more a part of the campus and suggested that he would like very much to have me as an administrative assistant for that year at least, 1946-1947. This was a wonderful opportunity for me. I was delighted to come back and be associated with Dr. Deutsch. As I remarked earlier, I hadn't known him awfully well up to that point, but had always admired him.

Nathan: He was a wonderful man.

Towle: Yes, a wonderful man.

Nathan: And a scholar.

Towle: That's right. I knew that everyone on the campus thought so highly of him. I was very pleased to be on his staff. As a matter of fact, I wrote to him right away and said I was very pleased and would certainly accept the position. Then, at the end of that year, 1947, or in the spring, a vacancy did occur in the Dean of Women's office.

Nathan: Did someone leave?



Towle: There was a reorganization of some sort. I've forgotten exactly what it was. I'll tell you what I think it was; as I recall it, Mrs. Donnelly became housing supervisor. Anyway, there was an assistant deanship. Mrs. Davidson would talk to Dr. Deutsch. Both knew of my desire to work directly with students, so they put their heads together and it was agreed that I would go to the Dean of Women's office. It was actually the Dean of Students' office, but the Dean of Women's name was on the door as a separate office. This was, I think, a concession to Mrs. Davidson at the time because she felt very strongly about it. Dean Stebbins had retired in 1941 and Mrs. Davidson had become Dean of Women at that time. And Dean Stone had become Dean of Students, I guess, in 1941. That was it.

Nathan: Yes, she mentions this little passage in her memoirs.

Towle: Does she?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: Then we can get the dates straightened, but I'm certain that's it. She was Dean of Women when he came to the campus in 1941. President Sproul asked him to be the first Dean of Students on the Berkeley campus. He was acting Dean of Undergraduates at UCLA.

Nathan: Formerly had it been Dean of Men and Dean of Women?

Towle: Dean of Undergraduates, and Dean of Women. [Laughter] The University has so many inconsistencies in its structure, it's simply wonderful. Professor Putnam had been Dean of Undergraduates for years. He was also Professor of Mathematics, Thomas Putnam. And Mrs. Davidson was Dean of Women after Miss Stebbins retired in 1941. Miss Stebbins voluntarily retired, mostly because she was unhappy at the setup, and also because her hearing was failing her very badly.

Nathan: There was already some problem in structure with this administration.

Towle: Yes. That's right.



Nathan: I'm still not quite clear about this. Was it Dean of Undergraduates, Dean of Women, and Dean of Men?

Towle: There was no Dean of Men until later. It was then Dean of Undergraduates. But the Dean of Undergraduates was like the Dean of Men.

I went into the office of the Dean of Women in the fall of 1947, having been with Dr. Deutsch a year.

Nathan: What sorts of things did you do in Dr. Deutsch's office?

Towle: I had an excellent opportunity to see the sorts of things that went over the provost's desk at that time.

Nathan: I was thinking what a wonderful opportunity that was.

Towle: It really was. He saw so many faculty and so many of the programs for research and all that coming across his desk. Some of these I saw. I didn't see them all, of course, because I didn't know anything about the research programs. But on the other hand he was very, I thought unusually, thoughtful about giving me an overall picture of what went on in his office because he knew I was interested and I had been around the University a long time; I was interested in it; and just because he was the sort of man he was. If you were in his office, he wanted you to have an idea of what was going on. I would see members of the faculty on things that weren't of any great moment. I could take down information for Dr. Deutsch and then relay it to him and then he would see them if it was necessary or he would give me his suggestions or recommendations and I'd let them know--that sort of thing.

I didn't create any great earthshaking events, or do anything very exciting as far as the University itself was concerned.

Nathan: No turmoil.



Towle: No turmoil or anything extraordinary, but I know I did a useful job for Dr. Deutsch. He didn't have a very large staff. As a matter of fact, he only had three people in his office. I think he was glad to have me because I did have considerable University background of one kind and another; and then I had had experience in the Marine Corps, which was valuable from an administrative point of view. So I fitted in very well.

I've always been grateful for that year just because it did give me a different picture of many things on the campus and gave me an opportunity, as Dr. Deutsch had said, to find my way around again and get acquainted with many members of the faculty and administration. It also gave me an opportunity to knew Dr. Deutsch himself and Mrs. Deutsch, both of whom I grew to be very fond of. We all became very good personal friends. Working with him was really a unique experience in some ways, and a very real opportunity, because he was a man of great intellectual ability and utmost integrity, with a fine intellect, a very liberal but disciplined point of view.

Nathan: Would there be any position comparable to his now?

Towle: I suppose the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs might have some similar campus responsibilities. Dr. Deutsch was Vice-President of the University and Provost on the Berkeley campus. But at that time the chancellorships had not been established. It was the President and then the various provosts.

"Once a Marine, Always a Marine"

Dr. Deutsch knew, as did I, that much as I appreciated the assignment in his office, that this was not what I wanted to do primarily: I wanted to get on with work with the students. So when the opportunity came, I went into Dean Davidson's office on July 1, 1947, as Assistant Dean of Women. I was



Towle: very happy about this, entered upon my new duties with enthusiasm, and expected to be there for the rest of my life, I guess. Then I got the call from the Marine Corps. This was in the summer of 1948.

I had not reckoned on the power of the old saying, "Once a Marine, always a Marine."

Nathan: Now was this the Commandant's office searching you out?

Towle: Yes. My first contact with the Commandant's office at that time was a telephone call from General Cates' aide. Clifton C. Cates was then the Commandant. I've gone through several commandants, you know. [Laughter] Well, anyway, it was his aide saying that the General would be in San Francisco, at the St. Francis Hotel, over the weekend, and would I be able to see him? You're always able to see the Commandant of the Marine Corps if you've ever been a Marine.

It was during June of 1948, after months of testimony before the Congress by members of the military services that the Women's Services Integration Act of 1948 was passed. It provided for the recruitment, training, and commissioning of women in the regular military establishments, not just in the reserve as it had been during the war. It was especially important for two reasons: It was proof of the high regard women in uniform had earned from their respective services during World War II, by their own record of performance; and it assured each of the armed services of a skeleton force of officers and enlisted women trained in military procedures around whom could be built a greatly expanded force if there ever needed to be one in case of national emergency. Instead of starting from scratch, as all women's services had to do in World War II, there now would be a continuing cadre of knowledgeable, informed women interested in making the military service a career, or at least serving for specific periods in peacetime. I know, of course, that such a law had been passed that summer. When I thought about it at all, which wasn't too often, it seemed a good idea, although originally I had been one of the women from World



Towle: War II who had grave doubts as to the need for having, or even the desirability, of having women in the services during peacetime. I wasn't convinced at first that this was a good idea. Then the logic of the whole thing did occur to me: that this was sound, just for the reasons I've mentioned.

It was in the summer of 1948 that my first interview with General Clifton Cates, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, took place. I think in our last session I referred to my meeting with him. Of course the outcome was my going back into the Marine Corps, but going as a "regular" this time to help set up the women's program in the regular service.

Division Head with Access to the Commandant

Nathan: When you were developing your concept of the access of the new director of the women to the Commandant, did you do this verbally or had you sent him a letter?

Towle: I had said in a letter, (but this was after I saw him in San Francisco that first time) that there were certain things that I felt strongly about, based on my wartime experience and observation. I stated that I would be glad to make some suggestions about the position of the director and the things I observed. I was quite sure that there should be a reorganization of some kind to make the director more directly responsible to the Commandant.

As I think I explained, during World War II when we were reservists, we had been responsible to the director of personnel. This had been the expedient thing to do because the women knew nothing about the service and there probably would have been a lot of waste motion if the director had been made directly responsible to the Commandant. But there





Katherine A. Towle in white summer  
uniform - Women Marines. 6-9-52.



Towle: were drawbacks, which both Colonel Streeter and I had been well aware of. I also felt strongly that the women should be on exactly the same basis as any other component of the Marine Corps. If there were to be heads of divisions of all of the other parts of the Marine Corps--like plans and policies, personnel, reserve, and everything else--then the Director of the Women's department should be in the same category. This relationship would make the position of the women much clearer and better understood. That's why I gave unsolicited recommendations to the Commandant. But he had told me that if I had any ideas he would be glad to consider them. I hadn't said flatfootedly, "I won't go back," at our San Francisco meeting but I had given him the idea that I really was not very much interested at that time, that I had just gotten started in a civilian career where I wanted to be. As you know, it turned out differently, and I never regretted it at all.

Nathan: How are such changes made in the Marine structure? Is it by decision of the Commandant alone?

Towle: The final decision, yes; but any changes in policy or structure are discussed with the various pertinent sections at Headquarters. This was not a matter that had to go to the Secretary of the Navy. This was an organizational matter within the Marine Corps itself. The Commandant always used the various heads of his divisions in consultation on such matters. And I'm sure there was a great deal of discussion about all of this--there must have been--before it went into effect.

Nathan: The pattern really was based on your--as you say, unsolicited--recommendations, and then he took it up?

Director of Women Marines in the Regular Establishment

Towle: Then he took it up with his advisors at Headquarters. I'm sure this was the way it worked out. It did turn



Towle: out--when I went back as the director of the women in the regular establishment in October, 1948, this was the way it was set up. It didn't make any difference who the director of women Marines would be; from then on she would be responsible to the Commandant. Now, you don't go running directly to the Commandant each time you have a problem or an idea, but an assistant commandant is always available. You also are then free to consult with the heads of the other departments, too.

Nathan: You're really colleagues.

Towle: Yes, that's right. This was important, and it has worked out very well.

Nathan: It has continued in this pattern?

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: Your recommendations were taken seriously.

Towle: Yes they there. I think, as a matter of fact, the Commandant and the other men who were in positions of authority at Headquarters were glad to have comments, and I felt sure they would be, of a woman officer who had been in a position of responsibility and had been in the service for that period of World War II when women were in the Marine Corps. There was nothing personal about this. I felt this would make a much smoother-running organization for the Marine Corps. A lot of this may be repetitious.

Nathan: I think you have brought in some of it, but not in great detail.

Towle: The Marine Corps was wonderful to me, all the time, always. I had a most pleasant association with everyone at Headquarters and everyone out in the field. I don't say that when we first went in during World War II we didn't have our bad moments, but that was bound to be.

One further point I might make about military service is that women are on the same basis as the men as far as their pay is concerned, based on rank and length of service. There is no discrimination.



Towle: If you are a corporal you get the corporal's pay. The pay structure was based on not only the grade--captain, major, lieutenant colonel, colonel, and so on, but also how many years the person had served. When I retired--I'm a retired colonel in the Marine Corps--I'm probably one of the cheapest retired colonels in the Marine Corps because I didn't have many years to accumulate retirement pay on. But just the same I do get retirement pay from the Marine Corps and it's based on a colonel's pay for the number of years that I was in the Corps. It's one of the few career opportunities that women have where they're sure they are going to get what the going rate is for everybody.

Nathan: Yes, that's true. Is there any restriction for women on marriage in the Corps?

Towle: There was no restriction on actual marriage but if they have children...

Nathan: Under a certain age?

Towle: Under a certain age, this was the catch. They made an exception, for instance, for Colonel Streeter because she had a daughter who was, at the time she went in, under eighteen years of age. That's the only restriction. Now, I think there's more effort made--certainly there was during the five years that I was in the regular Marine Corps--more effort made to take into consideration where the husband and the wife were to be stationed, so that one wouldn't be put on one side of the country and one on the other. But in wartime you can't consider those things. I'm sure they could marry during the war, but there was no guarantee that they would ever serve anywhere near each other. The needs of the service came first. The needs of the service always come first, especially in wartime.

Nathan: Well, when you took your uniforms out of mothballs [laughter] did you have to do something with the hemlines?

Towle: Oh, yes. During the war the skirts seemed terribly short.



Nathan: I'm looking at your picture and they don't look too short.

Towle: They went down then, the New Look. They were very short--or at least to me they seemed very short--in 1943 or so. And that I suppose was because of a scarcity of material. Then hemlines went down. This is a very modest length here. But that was in 1949 or 1950.

Nathan: Oh, yes, you were doing the social circuit.

Towle: At that time.

Nathan: In Washington.

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: You had, then, I take it to get at least new skirts if not new jackets.

Towle: Not necessarily, if there was material in the hems. When I went back in '48, the women's uniforms were the same as they had been during the war. During the next four and a half years that I was in the Corps, the women's uniform was revised. Not the basic color because it was the forest green the same as the men's; but they made the color a little softer and the jacket a little more feminine. It was more becoming to more women. The Marine Corps, you know, is very fussy about appearance, especially of its women. It was always suggesting that there ought to be physical fitness programs to keep the women in good shape. I went along with this, too. I think they should.

This [picture] was taken after the war. The skirts had all come down this far. Here's Captain Hancock with hers. It's down well below the knee. We had regulations--you couldn't wear these very high heels. You had to wear kind of a walking heel.

Nathan: Now, this is very contemporary, the over-the-shoulder bag. And what are those ribbons that you're wearing?



Towle: Let me see. I think this was the American Theater. You know you got those for serving in the war. What did I have at the time I went back? I must have had the Navy Commendation.

Nathan: Would that be a ribbon?

Towle: Yes, that would be a ribbon, too. All the medals have corresponding ribbons.

Nathan: I see.

Towle: There was the American Theater; we used to refer to it as the Battle of Washington. And then we got one for serving during the Korean War. But the two personal decorations which I have would be the Navy Commendation medal and the Legion of Merit. I received the Legion of Merit in 1953, when I retired as director. So I wouldn't have had it then.

Nathan: I wanted to ask you more about that. Isn't it rather rare?

Towle: Oh, no. Not really. It's known as the Colonel's Good-conduct Medal. [Laughter] But it was rare in those days for women. I was the second woman in the Marine Corps to get it. Colonel Streeter had gotten one. I was very pleased to get it. It was conferred on me when I retired at the end of April, 1953.

Nathan: In recent years, have you ever felt moved to do more than make speeches occasionally about your Marine service?

Towle: No, I don't think so. Of course, I don't have children and grandchildren, for one thing. And I can't believe that my sisters are just panting to have me write up my story. [Laughter] I know, Colonel Streeter always thought I ought to have my portrait painted in my dress uniform because, you know, it was a terribly handsome thing. But I said, "What am I going to do with it? What do I do with a portrait like that?" Unless you have children or grandchildren or somebody who might be interested, I can't imagine what I would do with the thing-- where would I leave it?



Nathan: If you would put on a dress uniform and have a picture taken, it would be perfect for this memoir. Because it is representative of an era.

Towle: I think I have a color photograph or a transparency somewhere. I doubt if I could get into the uniform now. I'm not sure; I am not going to even try.

Nathan: You give me the impression that you haven't changed too much.

Towle: One of the funniest remarks about the formal dress uniform occurred toward the end of the fittings when Mr. Bocher himself came in to take a look at it.

Nathan: How do you pronounce his full name?

Towle: Mainbocher. [French pronunciation]

Nathan: That's what I thought, but I also thought he had Americanized it somehow.

Towle: He is American. He was born in the Middle West somewhere. Mainbocher is the name he uses as a couturier. But when you address him, when you talk to him, you call him Mr. Bocher. [Bō shē'] It's spelled like "Mainbocher."

Well, Mr. Bocher came in and I was standing there. I was more slender than I am now. As you get older you get a little heavier through your middle, you know. The uniform fit beautifully. It had a cummerbund of the Marine Corps scarlet and all this gold lace around here on the jacket.

Nathan: On the sleeves?

Towle: And the jacket. The blouse was white. It had a soft collar, but it was military looking, tailored. It had a little black tie, and it fits into a little Marine Corps clip like this. This is the dress emblem.

Nathan: Is that a globe and an anchor and an eagle on top?



Towle: That's right. That's the Marine Corps emblem. The one on the uniform, of course, is a small one. It's even smaller than this. I'm supplied with lots of things.

Nathan: Yes. It's beautiful.

Towle: This is the dress one, you see. Of course, on our everyday uniforms, we wore the bronze emblem.

Nathan: Oh, this is the world, isn't it?

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: Is this a fouled anchor with a chain around it?

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: And a rope, and an eagle.

Towle: That's right.

Nathan: Mighty symbolic. So, you had all this elegance on.

Towle: I had all this elegance on. I said, "I think maybe this is a little bit tight around here," pointing to my middle.

And he said, "Now, Colonel, just remember that you can't eat that olive in your martini. It's going to show if you do." [Laughter]

Nathan: He must be a charming man. Is he?

Towle: He really was fun, and he was very interested in doing this. He had designed the women's uniform for the Navy. He designed the dress uniform for Captain Hancock, my counterpart in the Navy.

Nathan: Captain Joy Hancock.

Towle: That's right. Then he did the one for the Marine Corps. Headquarters decided that we should have him do ours, too. He didn't do the original of the everyday uniform that we wore during the war. Then the dress uniform had a boat cloak.



Nathan: What is a boat cloak?

Towle: The men have them, they wear them with their dress uniforms. It's a cape. And it's lined with the Marine Corps scarlet, and the top is very dark blue.

Nathan: Like Mephistopheles.

Towle: [Laughter] Yes. Gorgeous. I hate to tell you, but I think maybe the moths have gotten into mine. I don't dare look.

Nathan: You gave up all this gold bullion and red lining to come back to the University of California.

Towle: That's only a very small part of it, but it was fun. I'll get out a picture or two. If you want to use them, you can.

Nathan: Oh, yes. These are the things that get lost.

Towle: These are sort of historic in a way.

Nathan: They belong in the Smithsonian, probably.

Towle: I've been approached by a friend interested in the Oakland Museum. They want to have a room or something of historic uniforms and similar things. They're going to have one of Admiral Nimitz's uniforms. And I am told they'd like to have this one. The only trouble is--I'd be happy to have them, but the Marine Corps has its own museum in Quantico. I had a letter not long ago--I was a little surprised to get it, frankly, because it's been so long now. I had thought that if the Marine Corps wanted it they would have gotten in touch with me a long time ago, but they must have had thought transference because I got a letter saying did I still have the uniform, and if so, what was I doing with it. So I'm expecting to hear that they want it.

I wrote and said that I would be happy to consider their having it if they were going to really display it and not just stick it away in the archives somewhere.



Nathan: May I forestall the Marines and the thought transference by saying that Bancroft Library is the place for your papers and documents?

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: Not with the Marine Corps at Quantico.

Towle: Oh, no. I will give you any papers that I have, because I agree with you: I think they're going to be a bit more available if anybody ever wants them. I don't know how much anybody is interested in this sort of thing, but it is historical. There's no question about that.

Nathan: When you went back during peacetime, did you tour bases a great deal?

Towle: Yes. I lived in Washington, I had an apartment in Washington. My office was at Marine Corps Headquarters in the Navy Annex, across the Potomac, over on the Arlington side, where the Navy Department Headquarters were too--I should say some of the Navy Department, they were spread out all over, on both sides of the river. But the Marine Corps Headquarters was in the Navy Annex. It still is. Regularly assigned to the director of women Marines was--I suppose in a sense she was--an adjutant. She was usually a first or second lieutenant. And then a secretary. She too was a woman Marine. I had a very pleasant office in Marine Corps Headquarters. I don't know whether I was moved around while I was there or not. I can't seem to remember. The Marine Corps was always shifting around Headquarters because they always had to make more room for this or that. It sounds like the University. I remember I was on the first floor for a long time, stayed pretty well put there.

I would get temporary orders to visit the different posts and stations throughout this country where women were stationed. We did have some women overseas. What we called overseas then, was Hawaii, at the Headquarters of the Commanding General of the Pacific. I flew over in 1952. Not too long before my retirement the Marine Corps sent me there for a visit. I hadn't seen the setup there before.



Nathan: What was the purpose of a visit like this?

Towle: You always conferred with the commanding general or whoever was the head of the post or station, and talked with the women themselves and found out if they had any suggestions about their living conditions or about general morale. You see there was always a woman commanding officer at the various posts and stations and a good deal of the director's time, when she went on these visits, was with the troops and then with the commanding officer, and the commanding general or whoever was head of the post. I came here to San Francisco two or three times during that period. We had quite a few women in San Francisco, in the Department of the Pacific, as it was known then.

Now, the Department of the Pacific, as a department, has been done away with. That's been a reorganization since my active days in the Marine Corps. But at that time we had a couple of hundred girls stationed in San Francisco. They were in Headquarters there, at 100 Harrison Street, and in the district office of the Reserve.

I always felt that the most important places to visit were those where the women were on Marine Corps posts and stations, to see that their morale was good, that they were well-assigned, that discipline was appropriately being administered and all that kind of thing. Then I would make a report on this, especially if there was anything I thought ought to be brought to the attention of, for instance, the director of personnel or the inspector general or the quartermaster general. We had many women assigned in supply.

Nathan: At that time were there many nonwhite members?

Towle: During the war, I don't recall any. From 1948-53 when I was again at Headquarters, there were a few Negro women but never any great number. Since then I understand there have been more. There is no reason why there should not be. They are on a competitive basis just the way anyone else is.



Nathan: I was interested to see how it developed at that time.

Towle: I don't have any idea how many there are now. There are about 2500 women Marines altogether on duty now.

Nathan: Is that a fairly constant level?

Towle: I think so, for peacetime. But I just don't know what the minority percentage would be.

Nathan: When you were doing some of this traveling around, near the end of your term, was that when Clark Kerr talked to you?

Towle: Yes. This was in 1952. I had had a call first, I think it was--I was trying to reconstruct this last time. But as I remember it I had had a call from James Corley who was working with the President. He was in Sacramento working with education.

Nathan: He was a lobbyist, but he had another title.

Towle: That's right. But I had known Jim Corley for a long time and one day he was in Washington and called me at my home. We were chatting informally and he said, "Would you be interested in coming back to the University?" I had told him just as I later told Mr. Kerr that I was committed to the Marine Corps until 1953, and that was that.

I said, "Why do you want to know?"

He said, "I think maybe you're going to hear from Clark Kerr before too long. He's coming east and may want to see you."

I said this would be very nice. If he did, I'd be very happy to see him.

Nathan: He was sounding you out?

Towle: Yes. I think one of the questions was could I go to New York to see Mr. Kerr? I said certainly I could get to New York, this presented no great problem. I always could get to New York. We had



Towle: women on duty there.

Nathan: Oh, of course. [Laughter]

Towle: Just ask for temporary orders to go to New York and that was that. So there wasn't any problem in that respect. That was in 1952. As I think I told you last time, I did come back to the University the first of July, 1953.

Nathan: Right, you returned in July, 1953.

Towle: And I retired from the Marine Corps on April 30, which happened to be my birthday, in 1953.

Nathan: And then it was on the occasion of your retirement that you received the...

Towle: Legion of Merit. I don't know if you've heard of what they call the sunset parades at the Marine Corps barracks. They are the famous old barracks in southeast Washington at Eighth and I Streets. It's the home of the Commandant and also where many of the senior officers--generals attached to Headquarters--live. It's where the crack troops are trained for ceremonials and such occasions. You've read about the young Marine captain who's engaged to Lynda Johnson--he's an adjutant, I saw, of the post troops at the Marine Corps barracks. This is where the sunset parades are held. Some important person is usually asked to "take" the review, as they call it. They gave one in my honor when I retired, and I was asked to take the review.

Nathan: That would be overwhelming.

Towle: It was. It really was. All dressed up in my best blue uniform.

Nathan: I'll bet. And you knew how to salute by that time, too.

Towle: Absolutely. I was very military.

Nathan: Did you have a band and flags and the whole thing?



Fowle: Oh, yes, the Marine Corps did. I took the review, with the Commandant standing by me. [Showing picture] That was General [Lemuel C.] Shepherd. [Jr.]

Nathan: General Cates was gone by then, wasn't he?

Fowle: Yes. His term of office had expired and General Shepherd was his replacement as Commandant. He was the one who presented me with a letter of commendation from the Marine Corps at the parade, and the Legion of Merit. The latter had to be approved by the Secretary of the Navy. After the review there was a reception for me in one of the general's quarters.

Nathan: I see. From there you came back.

Fowle: Yes. Afterward, I stayed around Washington a couple of weeks or so, and then drove home to Berkeley. This was in May, 1953.



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting  
the LEGION OF MERIT to

COLONEL KATHERINE A. TOWLE,  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS,

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the Government of the United States as Director of Women Marines from 4 November 1948 to 30 April 1953. Exercising organizational and administrative ability of the highest caliber, Colonel Towle served with distinction throughout this period as the first Director of Women Marines in their role as a regular component of the United States Marine Corps. Recalled to active duty by the Commandant of the Marine Corps to undertake the exacting assignment of developing and expanding a small group whose complement at that time totaled 129 persons, Colonel Towle succeeded in building up the organization to the present-day strength of over 2800 women Marines despite spirited competition for qualified women from the other branches of the military service, as well as the commercial field. A resourceful and inspiring leader, she established sound practices to insure a careful selection of personnel and high standards of performance and labored untiringly to solve the many complex problems confronting her. Skillfully welding the personnel under her leadership into a highly efficient unit, she maintained a coordinated and effective command, thereby contributing in large part to the success of the women Marines in the various fields to which they were assigned throughout the service. Her outstanding professional skill, keen judgment and unwavering devotion to the fulfillment of a vital task reflect the highest credit upon Colonel Towle and the United States Naval Service."

For the President,

  
James V. Forrestal  
Secretary of the Navy.



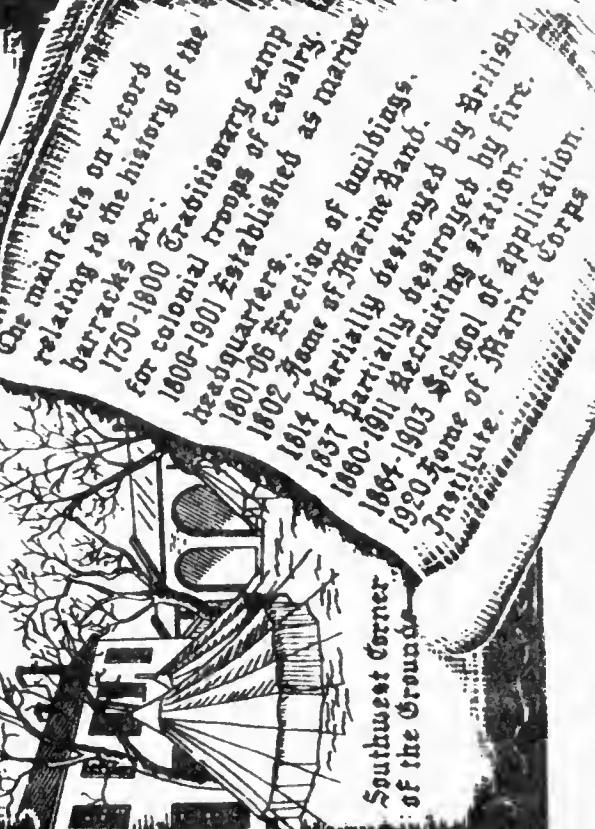
RETIREMENT CEREMONIES IN HONOR OF  
COLONEL KATHERINE A. TOWLE

# Marine Barracks



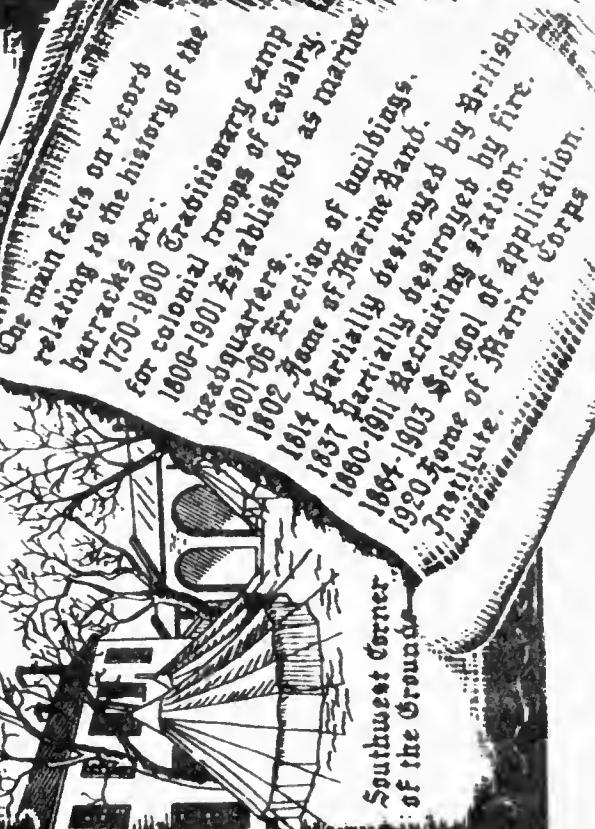
The Guardroom

South Gate



The Guardroom

South Gate



The Guardroom

South Gate

Colonel Katherine A. Towle, Director of Women in the United States Marine Corps, and former Assistant Dean of Women at the University of California, Berkeley, will receive her retirement orders today from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr.

Commissioned directly from civilian life as a captain in February, 1943, when the Women's Reserve was first established, Col. Towle served for three and a half years during World War II. She returned to her duties at the University in August, 1946, with the rank of colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve.



Colonel Towle accepted appointment in the regular Marine Corps in 1948 and was the first Director of the peacetime component of the Women Marines. She received the Navy Letter of Commendation with Ribbon in 1945.

Colonel Towle holds bachelor and master degrees from the University of California.



## MARINE BARRACKS WASHINGTON, D. C.

MARINE BARRACKS  
Founded in 1801

Colonel Jack P. Juras  
Lieutenant Colonel Warren P. Bayer  
Executive Officer Lieutenant Colonel J. B. Sweeney, Commander of Troops  
SUNSET PARADE  
30 April 1953

The Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C., traditional home of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, was founded in 1801. It is the oldest Marine post in the country and the Commandant's House is said to be one of the oldest public buildings still in continuous use in the Nation's Capital.

### PARADE BATTALION COMMANDER AND HIS STAFF

Lieutenant Colonel J. B. Sweeney, Commander of Troops

#### BATTALION STAFF

Major M. A. Hull  
Captain M. U. Whitmore

#### PARADE ADJUTANT

Captain F. M. McCurdy, Jr.

#### COMPANY COMMANDERS

Captain C. Ashton  
Captain C. R. Stephenson, III

#### ORDER OF ACTIVITIES

1. Troops march on the parade ground
2. March on the Colors
3. The United States Marine Band "Sounds Off"
4. Colors are lowered---The National Anthem
5. "Manual of Arms"
6. Adjutant publishes the Orders of the Day
7. Officers march center for special orders
8. Retirement ceremonies for Colonel 1. 12
9. Pass in review
10. March off the Colors

Part of the Marine Barracks actually was used as a burying ground for Marines and sailors during the early part of the last century and this fact might have given rise to several "half-facts" about the history of the plot of land 615 feet long and 250 feet wide bordered by Eighth and Ninth Streets and G and I Streets, S.E.

Like all old dwellings the Commandant's House has its legends. One concerns Aaron Burr, who killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel. In 1807, so the legend goes, he was quartered in the Barracks while awaiting trial. Burr carved his name on a wooden beam in the old Center House but the beam disappeared when the structure was demolished in 1906 and replaced by the present officers' houses.

Another legend originated in 1814, when Marine Barracks troops were dispatched to Bladensburg to meet the oncoming British. Two sergeants were left in charge of the Barracks and a chest containing twenty-five hundred dollars in gold for "contingent expenses." They buried the treasure under the Commandant's House to protect it from the invaders but were killed before its location could be revealed to the returning Marines.

The legend that Robert E. Lee was at one time Commandant of the Corps originated in 1859, when the Marines from the Barracks at 8th and Eye, ordered to Harper's Ferry to capture John Brown, came under command of Colonel Robert E. Lee, U. S. Army.

A hall for the United States Marine Band, one of the many additions to the Barracks, was completed in 1901. Dormitories, the guard house, an enlisted club, tailor shop, and the Band Hall now occupy the buildings at the south end of the Barracks grounds.

The long brick edifice opposite the officers' houses is used primarily as a dormitory. It includes also the offices of the Commanding Officer and two detachments, a mess hall, post exchange, and library. It is in this long structure, fronted by the pillared arcade, that the spirit of the 1801 Marine is perpetuated today.



**REMARKS BY COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS AT RETIREMENT  
PARADE OF COLONEL KATHERINE A. TOWLE, U.S.M.C.**

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Colonel Towle, on behalf of the officers, men and women of the Marine Corps I wish to express our deep regret that your distinguished career must come to a close today upon your having reached the statutory retirement age.

I know that you must view your departure from active duty with regret. Nevertheless, your years of loyal and meritorious service in our Corps must be a source of great pride to you.

Your outstanding accomplishments during World War II were recognized by the Secretary of the Navy in 1948 when he awarded you the Letter of Commendation with ribbon just prior to your release from active duty. When Congress provided for a regular component of women in the Corps, it was our good fortune to have once again the benefit of your knowledge, experience and counsel.

Following your assignment as the first regular head of our Women Marines in 1948, you have directed this important activity with great success, and have guided the Women Marines through the many trials of their organization and expansion.

Your years of service as Director of Women Marines have been years of achievement. You have brought about greater utilization of women in the Marine Corps--not only in many new occupational fields but at many Marine Corps posts and stations, at home and abroad.

Through your efforts, we have seen increased training of Women Marines as specialists. The establishment of a splendid Staff Noncommissioned Officers Leadership School for women is the fruit of your energy.

During your tour as Director, a completely new uniform wardrobe for Women Marines has been developed, including their first "Dress Blues."

Your devotion to duty and your high standards of personal conduct have set the pattern for all Women Marines. You will long continue to be an inspiration to the women of our Corps and will be greatly missed both professionally and personally by your many friends.

We are proud of your Marine Corps record and are confident that in your new position of Dean of Women at the University of California you will add new laurels to your already illustrious career.

Today, it is my honor to extend to you not only my personal best wishes but those of the entire Marine Corps for many years of happiness and the satisfaction of knowing you leave the Marine Corps with a job "WELL DONE."

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# United States Marine Corps



15 MARCH 1988

*Continued from back cover*

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**ANSWER** The answer is 1000. The first two digits of the product are 10.

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Geography

www.ijerph.org

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*Continued from back cover*

1960-1961

1960-61 - 1961-62

1000-10000 m.s⁻¹

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HEADQUARTERS U. S. MARINE CORPS  
COMMANDANT'S OFFICE  
WASHINGTON

The Commandant of the Marine Corps takes pleasure in commending  
**COLONEL KATHERINE A. TOWLE,**  
**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS,**  
for service as set forth in the following

"For excellent service in the line of her profession as Director of Women Marines from 4 November 1948 to 30 April 1953. An administrator of sound judgment and keen foresight, Colonel Towle served with distinction as the first Director of Women Marines in their role as a regular component of the U. S. Marine Corps. Overcoming the many varied and complex problems confronted during the inaugural stages of establishing the women of the Marine Corps as an integral part of the regular force and expertly meeting situations resulting from a continuing increase in personnel, she developed and maintained a coordinated and highly efficient command. Thorough and resourceful as a director, Colonel Towle contributed materially to the success of Women Marines in the various fields to which they were assigned throughout the service. Her inspiring leadership, exceptional professional ability and outstanding devotion to duty reflect the highest credit upon herself and the United States Marine Corps".

A copy of this letter has been made a part of Colonel Towle's official record.

*Leroy C Shepherd Jr*

Commandant of the Marine Corps.



## A DEAN AT THE UNIVERSITY

Nathan: When you returned to the campus, weren't you rather careful to understand the political situation concerning those who might have been expecting to be named Dean of Women?

Towle: This had worried me. When Mr. Kerr had approached me in 1952, I had heard a little bit about the situation--or at least I could surmise what the situation on the campus might be with reference to a successor to Mrs. Davidson, as there had been a two-year interim without a dean.

I was concerned about it because the two women who were there in the office who might very well expect to be considered were old associates and friends of mine.

Nathan: Were they Alice Hoyt and Betty Neely?

Towle: No, no, Betty Neely wasn't there. I brought Betty Neely in as assistant dean the first year that I was there as Dean of Women. They were Alice Hoyt and Catharine Quire. I made it very clear to Mr. Kerr that I did not want to come or did not want to be offered a position, which would in any way interfere with the possibility of either one of them being given the position. After all, they had been carrying on the work of the office for two years. I felt I just didn't want to have that sort of relationship. I was assured by him that there was no thought of either appointment being made and I could just forget about that part as far as it might affect my decision. He would wait until I finished my Marine Corps commitment. He said he wanted to talk further with Mr. Sproul about it. Mr. Sproul was, of course, still President. Mr. Kerr had just been appointed Chancellor at Berkeley. Then later I got a letter from the President.



Towle: The long and the short of it was that in the spring of 1953 the Marine Corps and the University made simultaneous announcements: one of my retirement, and the other of my appointment as Dean of Women. I'm sorry I no longer have the announcement that came out in the Oakland Tribune. I seem to have misplaced it. The headlines in one of the issues of the Oakland Tribune were just a scream. There were letters that high. [gesture] [Laughter]

Nathan: Oh, really! 72-point type.

Towle: Simply enormous: "Colonel Towle Appointed Dean of Women" or something like that. There was a great deal of local interest in who was to be the next Dean of Women. So when it was announced that I was retiring--and as I say, this was a sort of simultaneous thing, the Marine Corps announced my retirement and the University announced my appointment. They worked together on this, the public relations office of each had a lovely time. I think the announcement was made the middle of April, 1953, just before I was ready to retire from the Marine Corps. At one time I had a lot of clippings about this.

Nathan: Yes, the Daily Cal had a series of articles, of course, about you.

Towle: I took over officially on the first of July, 1953 as Dean of Women and Associate Dean of Students.

#### Responsibilities of the Dean of Women

Nathan: How would you describe the responsibilities of the Dean of Women? When you assumed them, what did you consider to be your task?

Towle: My feeling was, or rather my understanding of the position was that it would deal with almost everything that had to do with women students except that I



Towle: would have no jurisdiction over planning their academic program or anything of that sort. That, after all, was the academic deans' prerogative, the academic departments' prerogative. But the welfare of women students, their housing, finances, health, any problems they might encounter on campus, and discipline (always minimal) in the sense of presenting their cases to the proper disciplinary committee, were part of the Dean's responsibility. For instance, in the infrequent occasions when we had a women's disciplinary case coming before the faculty committee on student conduct, I would interview the student and present her case with any documentation that I felt was important for the committee to know. The student was always advised of what this might be.

Nathan: Was this an administrative committee?

Towle: Yes, it was appointed by and responsible to the Chancellor. As you probably know, there was that time in the fall of 1964 when part of the difficulty over the disciplining of the students during the FSM was the students' objection to going before the regular committee because it was responsible to the Chancellor. They wanted a committee responsible only to the faculty. Finally there was an interim committee appointed during the midst of the FSM upheaval.

Nathan: If, for example, a woman was having difficulty academically, would she come to the Dean of Women's office?

Towle: Very often. This is what we were there for in part. We were a kind of a sounding board for everybody and everything and we wanted women to feel that there was some place that they could come with their questions or problems and receive a sympathetic hearing. We would tell them where they could get the kind of help they needed, or assistance, or information, if it did not come within our purview. Lots of times it was just purely a lack of information on their part. We tried to maintain a real open door policy.

Nathan: How did you make contact with the women?



Towle: One way I made contact was to have (and I think they still do it now, but it may be in a different form because of the numbers of students involved) a general meeting for all new women students. This was during part of the orientation at the beginning of each semester. This was not compulsory, but most of the new women students came, judging by the numbers in attendance.

Nathan: Where would you hold the meeting?

Towle: I'm trying to think, before the Student Union was built, where did we have it? I think it was Wheeler Auditorium. Yes, I always had it for the women in Wheeler Auditorium. At first, the men didn't have a similar kind of meeting but they finally did also. Two or three of the men deans held them: the Dean of Men with two or three of the assistants would talk with the new men students and try to acquaint them with all the campus resources available to them. They met with students in different locations on the campus. But I always had first call on Wheeler Auditorium for my meeting. It was large enough at that time to take care of the entering women students. Then, of course, a great deal was done through the living groups, and I felt this was important. Sometimes one had the feeling it might be a waste of time, but by and large it seemed worthwhile.

#### Commuters and Off-Campus Living

Nathan: Did you meet with students in smaller groups?

Towle: I ate many dinners at the different living groups, and attended many of their meetings. At first, this meant just the boarding houses, cooperatives, and sororities. Then, eventually when we had the residence halls, I visited them too--always, of course, by invitation. So the women knew who you were and what you looked like and what you stood for.



Towle: There was a group that always worried me, and I never was able to work out communication with them too satisfactorily, although we did try. These were the commuting students. Let me put it another way. When students live in a group situation, you can keep in touch with them. But when a student commutes to the campus, she often had nothing to bring her to the campus except classes certain days of the week, or something of that sort. We have a lot of students who commute, you know.

Nathan: Right. This includes the apartment house dwellers.

Towle: That's right. All the students who live around are considered commuters in this sense. There were not as many apartment house dwellers when I first became Dean of Women as there are now. In the first place, there weren't as many apartment houses. In the second place more of the women students lived at home if they didn't live on campus. Now they all want to live in apartments and have the freedom which apartment house living gives them. This is why I think it is important that the University consider various types of living accommodations. I don't say the University should build a whole lot of apartments, but I think that the type of accommodation that is built by the University should try to satisfy the demand for this type of group or communal living. The so-called "barracks" type, no matter how comfortable, does not appeal to present-day students. I don't mean the high-rise residence halls aren't attractive in many ways, but they still are the old institutional type of living. You didn't think so much of it at the time they were built, but as time went on, and even before I left the University in 1965, I did. Of course by that time there was a very real movement toward men and women finding individual places to live and living their own lives off campus, separate from the University. I think they miss a great deal in many ways and yet on the other hand, I can also understand why they want this kind of freedom from what they consider "regimentation." We're dealing with an entirely different age now--more independent for one thing, and eager to live their own lives without interference.



Nathan: I suppose, too, the increase in the proportion of graduate students had something to do with it.

Towle: That's right, this has something to do with it. Certainly it does.

Nathan: So you really, all the time, did have the feeling that it was not easy to make yourself known.

Towle: No, it wasn't. But you do everything you can. When I look back on it, although it didn't seem surprising at the time, I recall how many students would just wander in looking for someone to talk to, and not always being able to articulate exactly what they wanted or what was bothering them. Many times it's the fact that they don't know you that makes it possible for them to ask questions.

Nathan: When a student would wander in, was it necessary to make an appointment?

Towle: It depended. Sometimes it wasn't. Then as enrollments grew, it got to the point where they usually did have to make appointments. There were just too many students and too few of us, with too little time. I always made it a point never to keep a student waiting if I could possibly help it. If a student made an appointment at 10 o'clock, I tried to be ready at 10 o'clock for that student, and I tried not to put the student off too long in making an appointment. I'd make it right then and there if I could, but I wasn't always there because I got involved in so many administrative committees. When I became Dean of Students, I didn't see so much of the individual students, and this was the one thing I missed. I enjoyed being Dean of Women quite frankly, more than I did being Dean of Students because I had more close association--personal relationship--with the students. And this is what I really liked.



Dean of Students

Nathan: This business of rising in the hierarchy has its penalties, doesn't it?

Towle: Yes, it does. Of course I knew this when I was asked to take the position, but needless to say I was pleased to have been asked and excited about doing it. But I knew I was never again going to have the kind of close relationship with students that I had as Dean of Women. It is one of the penalties of so-called advancement. I shall, however, always remember with pleasure and pride the morning Chancellor Strong asked me to accept the appointment as acting Dean of Students.

Nathan: Were you the first woman to be Dean of Students?

Towle: Yes, the first woman at the University of California.

Nathan: There had been, as you explained to me, a Dean of Students and Dean of Women.

Towle: Yes. There had been, as I said last time, a Dean of Undergraduates, but he was actually the Dean of Men. Then there was the Dean of Women. And that went on until 1940. Then Hurford Stone came to Berkeley from UCLA, where he had been acting Dean of Undergraduates. That was the first time that the University had used the title Dean of Students. President Sproul invited him to come to Berkeley.

Nathan: He was the first Lean?

Towle: Of Students, yes, on the Berkeley campus. He held that position until his retirement in 1959. Then, you see, there was a Dean of Women. That was Miss Stebbins. Now, just exactly what happened to the Dean of Undergraduates title at Berkeley I do not recall. It doesn't matter. I think it was dropped before Dean Stone came. So there was a Dean of Women but there was no comparable title under him for Dean of Men to begin with. Miss Stebbins was



Towle: there as Dean of Women for just a year with Dean Stone. Then she retired voluntarily.

Nathan: At this time, then, he was pushing this Counselor of Students title for the women?

Towle: I think this came a little later, but it was in his mind, I know, at the time Mr. Kerr talked to me in 1952 because he told me so. This was when I was very flat-footed about the title.

Nathan: Mrs. Davidson had resisted.

Towle: Yes, that's right, and all of the other women in the office had resisted the change in title. They didn't want the title of Counselor, either, you see. They all would have become counselors, or assistant counselors. This was during the period, as I recall (I may have mentioned this last time) where this was becoming a kind of popular thing, especially among the men Deans of Students, many of whom were pushing to substitute the title counselor for Dean of Women. [Laughter] It's just typical, absolutely typical.

Nathan: A pyramid with me on top.

Towle: Right, as long as I'm up there. I used to pull Dean Stone's leg about this every once in a while. At first he didn't know how to take it, but then he finally would laugh. We got on well. He was a little leery about having me in his office at first.

Nathan: Yes?

Towle: Very wary, he was quite hesitant. I don't think he viewed this appointment with wild enthusiasm at all.

Nathan: He probably didn't feel that you were too malleable.

Towle: That's right. By and large, though I'm sure he found me entirely cooperative and enthusiastic about my work. In all fairness, I think many people didn't give Dean Stone credit for the things he did as Dean of Students. It's no secret--certainly it isn't to anybody who was on the campus and knew what the temper of the campus was at that time--there



Towle: was no real rapport between him and Chancellor Kerr. None whatever. It was just one of those things. You can't blame people for this sort of thing. It was just a fact of life. And Dean Stone knew this, particularly the last two years of his tenure as Dean of Students. This was hard for him in many ways, but he was determined not to let it interfere with what he saw as his job as Dean of Students. I give him a good deal of credit, because I don't think that he worked under very happy circumstances, and I don't say that Chancellor Kerr did either. I think it was too bad that they didn't see more eye-to-eye, but they were so entirely different in so many ways and they looked at things entirely differently.

Nathan: I think that's true. In many ways Dean Stone had the idea that the campus should be peaceful and quiet, and this was just not the time when many campus people were of that view.

Towle: That's right. When Dean Stebbins retired in '41, she had been there a year with him as Dean of Students. I would have loved to have been a little eye in the wall at that time.

Nathan: Wouldn't you! [Laughter]

Towle: Then she decided that she would retire voluntarily in 1941.

Nathan: She was not of retirement age?

Towle: Oh, no. I could figure out how old she was, but I don't think she was due to retire then. I think she had a few more years. Then Mrs. Davidson became Dean of Women right away, and had that position for the next ten years, when her retirement came up, in 1951.

Nathan: Right, and then there was the interim.

Towle: Then there was that interim, and I came in 1953, and I was Dean of Women for eight years. I was appointed acting Dean of Students. You know, they always appoint as "acting." I was appointed acting



Towle: Dean of Students July 1, 1961. But I also was holding my permanent title, so-called, of Dean of Women, too. You don't drop your title, in case things don't work out. [Laughter]

Nathan: That's the old system. That's one of the few humane things about it.

Towle: That's right. [Laughter] I was made regular--the "acting" was removed the first of the year--1962.

Nathan: Just what is the mechanism? Does the President name you? Does this go through the Regents?

Towle: It did at that time. I don't know what it does now. I think it doesn't; I think it goes through the Chancellor of the various campuses. At that time decentralization hadn't taken place. When I became Dean of Students in January, 1962, Betty Neely was appointed Dean of Women, which pleased both of us very much.

Nathan: Do you think that perhaps one effect of the decentralization has been to remove the Regents more from individual campus decisions?

Towle: That's what I understood was one of the purposes of decentralization. The University was getting so large and complex that it was also considered better administration. Really, from the standpoint of administration if nothing else, it would be my point of view that there should be a real head of a campus, with broad responsibilities, working always through his faculty, administrative, and student committees, preferably a mixture of all three campus elements.



The Prytanean Project

Nathan: To digress for a moment, I see you have received the information on the proposed Oral History Project for Prytanean. Prytanean had wanted to do something for the University Centennial.

Towle: Are you a member of Prytanean?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: I gathered you were. There are great gaps, I suppose, in the history of the organization.

Nathan: Apparently, from what I gather, there are bits and pieces, and they really would like to have something more complete, gathered through the interviews.

Towle: I think it could be very interesting.

Nathan: And perhaps of value, in the sense that it is part of the University's history for the Centennial.

Towle: It is, as a matter of fact. Of course, many prominent alumnae, as you know, have been connected with Prytanean over the years and have been very much interested in its activities. I was president of the Berkeley Chapter when I was a senior. It started as a University of California organization only.

Nathan: Not like Mortar Board?

Towle: No. Mortar Board was started around 1925. There was no Mortar Board when I was in college. That's too young an organization for me, although the active chapter extended honorary membership to me while I was Dean of Women. Prytanean was started in 1900. It was for junior and senior women and it had always been just at the University of California, Berkeley. As a matter of fact, Mortar Board made overtures to Prytanean at one time, I understand, to become part of Mortar Board, and



Towle: Prytanean didn't want to--they wanted to remain Prytanean.

It took a long time for the membership of the organization to approve of the idea of going on other campuses of the University. They finally consented to going to the Davis campus, because some of the older alumnae who were married to University professors and lived in Davis wanted to have a chapter there. There was a great deal of hesitancy on the part of the older members of Prytanean, the Alumnae Association, which has always been very strong, to go farther afield than Berkeley. Finally there was a chapter started at UCLA, too. I don't know the dates of this. It was while I was away. I gather it was not tremendously successful in the first few years. Then it went off the campus.

Nathan: At UCLA?

Towle: At UCLA. Then it came back again after several years, and there is, as far as I know, a chapter of Prytanean at UCLA. I'm not absolutely certain of its status there now. But it's been primarily a Berkeley organization. The Alumnae guard this, consider this theirs. Of course, I think it's an interesting organization.

Nathan: It is. And on a big, diverse campus like this, many people who've been interested in other things seem to like to keep in touch through Prytanean.

Towle: Yes. The fact is that it's been on campus so long now. It's 1900 to 1968. That's quite a long time.

Nathan: You were saying that you saw no reason to maintain customs that no longer had any vitality.

Towle: No, I don't.

Nathan: But you think this one seems to have it?

Towle: Oh, yes, this one has survived and probably will always survive. If you have met some of the older alumnae, you know how deeply they feel about it, and the honorary members they've taken in like



Towle: Mrs. Sproul and Mrs. Bellquist and Mrs. Strong are staunch supporters. Mrs. Kerr, of course, is an honorary member; I don't know that she has ever been particularly active in it because she probably didn't have time. Mrs. Strong is active in it now (1967), very active. A lot of these honorary members are most loyal and most interested in what Prytanean does.

Nathan: The sale of Ritter Hall apparently was a big problem.

Towle: Oh, yes, yes.

Nathan: An anguished one.

Towle: It went through a period of great anguish, I'm sure. Because, you see, Prytanean had started Ritter with the purpose of helping women students find suitable places to live at modest cost. It also emphasized--and this is one of the things they've been proudest of, and quite properly so--that it was one of the few, at that time, living groups that wanted to have students of every race, color, and creed. There was never any consideration for restriction. They also wanted the students to live as inexpensively as they could.

With the advent of the cooperatives (USCA), as they grew and grew, the need no longer existed for this one particular place, Ritter Hall, because there were other places where students could live, even less expensively, though not always as comfortably or pleasantly.

Nathan: It is something to have pioneered.

Towle: It was definitely a pioneer project, and a very successful one. It was successful primarily because of the efforts of the alumnae, who worked hard and gave a great deal of time and effort, and money, to see that the project did prosper. I didn't mean to get onto a dissertation on Prytanean. But I was interested, when I got the letter the other day from the association and read that you would be advising on their Oral History.



Nathan: It started because I am an old schoolmate of Betty Bauer's.

Towle: I've known Betty--I've always called her Elizabeth--for years. In fact I just wrote her a note the other day. I hadn't realized that her mother, who was so active in Prytanean for so many years, had just died; so I wrote her a little note. Then I remembered her class must have been about the same time as yours.

Nathan: Yes, '41. It will be interesting to see what the group can do with the project. It will be a different kind of thing in that they will have a staff of volunteers asking about the same questions of all the women. It won't be a personal memoir, as your is. It'll be an organizational memoir, and that's different.

Towle: That will also throw light, I should think on certain aspects of the University's growth, and changing mores.

Nathan: I would think so. And I hope they will be able to find out a little bit about what the women have done with their lives.

I was interested in your saying earlier that you wanted to put your whole campus tenure in perspective.

Towle: I've been thinking about what would be appropriate about the FSM...what do we want to call it?

Nathan: Episode?

Towle: Episode. Since it happened the very last year in my tenure as Dean of Students, it was bound to have a special impact on me. Then I began to realize that if I'm not careful I'm going to get this thing all out of proportion. After all, it was an episode within a year, a far-reaching one, which left an exceedingly important and indelible imprint on the University. I'm not underestimating or belittling it at all. In many ways it contributed a great deal to a kind of awakening at the University. It certainly brought into the open things that few had



Towle: thought about or realized or had shut their eyes to as far as life on the campus and educational objectives were concerned.

As far as my own career at the University was concerned, it was an episode, a painful one in many ways, but not one to which I'm going to give undue emphasis in recounting the events of my many years of service to the University. And when we come to it, I hope to give it a fair and accurate appraisal as I see it.

#### Changes in the Offices of the Deans

In those years, first as Dean of Women and then as Dean of Students, there were really a lot of changes within the Dean of Women's and Dean of Students' offices. The concept of a combined Dean of Students office had many possibilities and I was determined when I became Dean of Students, that as long as it was a single office, dealing with both men and women students, it would be one in fact as well as in name. This meant a rearrangement of some of the offices so that we wouldn't have all the women in one area and the men in another, as they always had been. I suppose I felt strongly about this because as Dean of Women, so many times quite without thought, I'm sure, I was not let in on some of the office decisions. I was just overlooked as a member--as a senior member--of the staff when matters pertaining to the men, for example, were decided. You see what I mean?

Nathan: Of course.

Towle: After all, if it was the Dean of Students office, it should be just that and basic policies should be the same for men and women. But I had to find things out the hard way lots of times. Not being shy about these matters I used to complain, bitterly sometimes, to Dean Stone, "I didn't know this, why



Towle: didn't you tell me?"

"Oh," he'd say, "Miss Towle, I didn't realize I hadn't told you."

Nathan: It wasn't part of the circuit.

Towle: No. The women were not on the circuit. This was understandable in a way because for a long time, quite frankly they didn't want to be on the circuit. The Dean of Women wanted to be separate. But I felt as long as I was part of the Dean of Students office, when I became Dean of Women I decided I was definitely a part. This was the setup and I had gone along with it when I was asked to accept appointment as Dean of Women. Also I saw the logic of it. By that time the University had grown--the numbers of students--both men and women--and the work that was to be done had grown tremendously. Then the national concept of a Dean of Students office had changed to some extent as far as women were concerned. There were so many more women involved in positions which took into consideration men's activities as well as those of women students.

Nathan: This was in '53?

Towle: I came back in '53. Of course it took me a while. I was not going to barge in with a whole lot of new ideas until I had shaken down and felt my way around. I had the greatest cooperation, the finest cooperation I could have wanted, from all of the women on the staff. I pay great tribute to both Miss Hoyt and Mrs. Quire for all the help they gave me at that time, because I'm sure it was not always an easy position for them to be in. But no one could have been more cooperative than the two of them, and all of the others on the staff--Dean Stone, too. But, you see, I had ideas about what I wanted the office to become and I knew it would take a little time to get some of these things across.



Recognition for the Dean of Women's Office

Nathan: What was your concept?

Towle: I felt that it was very important to have the Dean of Women and the Dean of Women's staff known on the campus. Because there had been no Dean of Women for two years, it seemed important to get the Dean of Women back on the map, if you know what I mean.

Nathan: Quite.

Towle: And I did know a good many faculty at that time and a good many administrative officers. I knew them personally, from years of association of one kind and another, even though I had been away for about eight and a half years counting my wartime service and then the service during peacetime afterward. I wanted the Dean of Women's office and the persons in it to have the proper kind of recognition because of the women students. I felt they should have this feeling that there was an office and that there were people in that office who really cared about their affairs, who were available to them, and who were known. This certainly isn't a new concept as far as the University is concerned--Mrs. Davidson had this concept and Miss Stebbins too. But the University had expanded greatly and so had all of its activities.

I soon realized that so much of it had been geared to a man's world. This I was not happy about, professionally. I felt the women should be known on the campus and I wanted a staff that would be highly thought of and would work well with the men in the office. As long as the University had set it up as a Dean of Students' office--I'll confess that I was not entirely enthusiastic to begin with about the idea of a Dean of Students' office with a Dean of Women and a Dean of Men, but I took the position knowing exactly what the setup was. But I also was



Towle: determined when I took the position that the Dean of Women and those responsible to her were going to have very real standing.

I came in the summer of '53. Alice Hoyt was retiring at the end of that academic year. In any event, there was to be an opening in the fall of '54.

#### Staffing the Dean's Office

Nathan: There was, I take it, a limit on staff at that time.

Towle: Oh, yes, there was, and there always had been, but at that time there would be a vacancy to be filled for the next academic year. There was a great tendency at the time I became Dean of Women to always pick University of California people. Now, there's nothing the matter with University of California people, but I thought it would do no harm to broaden the base a bit and find well-qualified staff members from elsewhere because they could bring new ideas and new concepts of personnel work to the office. The first appointment that I was responsible for--of course all of the appointments were subject to Dean Stone's approval as head of the office--but my first appointment was in 1954. I went each year to the national meeting of the National Association of Women Deans and Counselors; this particular one was held in Buffalo. I interviewed Betty Neely there, among others. The result was that she joined the staff in July, 1954, as Assistant Dean of Students.

Nathan: Where had she been before?

Towle: At Ohio State University as an assistant to the Dean of Women there. She seemed to have all the qualities that I was looking for in a candidate at



Towle: that particular time: she was young and attractive and on her toes and knew what was what, had training in personnel work and all that. I thought it was important that we should have some new blood in the office. This was what I wanted very much and I was able to bring in several well qualified women assistant deans during the eight years that I was there. I might just mention a few.

Patricia Brauel was on our staff as an assistant dean. She is now Dean of Students at Mills College and has been for a good many years. She came to us from a midwestern state university. She's a Pomona graduate, with an M.A. from Stanford. She worked wonderfully well with both men and women students and contributed a great deal to the office. Mills College was fortunate to get her. Then we had an excellent person in Helen Clark who was then getting her doctorate in education at Columbia. She came before she finished her doctorate; it was to be conferred the next year. She is now Associate Dean of Students at Maryland. I mention these two as examples of the calibre of person I was looking for. There were several others.

I felt, as I did in the Marine Corps, that one hates to lose good people to other posts or to other colleges. On the other hand, it means they really are able if they are sought out by other places and a good administrator, if he has the interests of his staff at heart, encourages them to go on to higher positions.

I used to discuss this a great deal with Dean Stone; he didn't always share my enthusiasm about the office being a training ground for talented younger assistants. When I was in a position to do something about it I did. We had several new members of the staff in 1961. I'm glad to say some of them chose to remain at Berkeley; others have gone elsewhere to positions of responsibility. I was delighted that we could get the type of younger person we had, who came with different points of view and experiences.

You see at one time--I hate to say this, but it's perfectly true--there was a feeling among



Towle: certain people on the campus that the Dean of Students office was a kind of catchall for persons you didn't know what else to do with. If he were a nice guy and you didn't quite know what to do with him, he might make a good assistant dean, or something like that. To me, who had great professional pride in what I was doing and in the office itself, this was anathema. I was not about to have this happen. There was too much of the feeling that deans were expendable. (Later, I'm sure many of the students thought we all were!)

The staff expanded tremendously in the four years that I was the Dean of Students. The administration was very generous in giving me appointments. One or two of them I didn't even ask for. They'd indicate I could have an extra assistant dean if I wished one.

Nathan: What sorts of qualities were you looking for?

Towle: The characteristics we wanted were not only sound educational background and ability to fit into an academic community, but also promise of working well with students--genuine interest in students, in student organizations, in housing, or whatever it might be--all the areas a dean of students office concerns itself with, which is practically everything to do with students.

I worked very closely with the University's personnel department officers as all non-academic appointments, including assistant deans, were expected to meet certain qualifications. For example, a candidate must have at least a masters' degree, unless he had had equivalent experience in teaching or administration, and two years' experience. Personal qualifications were, of course, extremely important. Several of our staff had taught for a year or so in a public school; several came with experience as assistants or assistant deans in a student personnel office in other colleges or universities.

And I also wanted to have an office where one felt that he was carrying his weight and was interested first and foremost in doing a good job.



Towle: You didn't follow a person around to see whether or not he was doing his job; you just expected to have the kind of office where everybody enjoyed working together for the same purposes.

We did departmentalize, I suppose you might call it, some of our work, simply because it made it easier on a big campus. We had one dean, for instance, assistant dean, working in housing and directly responsible to Mrs. Ruth Donnelly, who as Housing Supervisor, is a member of the Dean of Students' staff. I believe her title now is Associate Dean of Students (Housing). Other assistant deans had responsibility for working with student organizations, another with social and recreational programs in living groups, and so on.

### The Residence Hall Program

The residence hall program became increasingly important during the years I was there. The University had built the high-rise complexes at Durant and College Avenues; then on Haste, and lastly on Durant below Telegraph. The program really grew by leaps and bounds, especially after Mr. Kerr became President because he believed very much in residence hall living; he was attuned to it. His own experience, I suppose, at Swarthmore accounted for much of his interest and concern. Although Swarthmore was a small college, he recognized the values of student life on a residential campus. We couldn't hope to have that kind of residential campus at Berkeley but at least we could make a beginning by providing residence halls for a percentage of the students.

You see, we had nothing, really, to begin with. We had only Bowles Hall for a good many years, off by itself. And then Stern Hall was built. During the war these [Smyth-Fernwald] halls were put up.



Towle: I say "these" because they happen to be across the road from where I live now. They all filled a need.

I am not an expert and never considered myself one on student housing, but knew some of the problems. I had no particular training or background in residential living. But I did try to learn about it as I went along. I was acquainted with a great many colleagues in other universities and colleges who knew a good deal about housing and the concept of residence halls. This presented something new to the Berkeley campus and many of us had much to learn.

Nathan: That's a responsibility of your office?

Towle: Yes. As I said earlier, Mrs. Donnelly was responsible for a great deal of the program, and has contributed immeasurably to its success.

Nathan: You were speaking earlier of recreation. Were you thinking of parties and events within the halls?

Towle: Yes, to some extent. And also intramural sports programs, things of that sort. This was particularly important for the men. The growing recognition of its importance accounts for the many excellent intramural fields, tennis courts, and so forth which one finds adjacent to the halls.

In connection with the residence halls, the Faculty Fellows program deserves mention. It was started shortly after the "high-rise" halls were completed. Its purpose was to bring together on a voluntary basis faculty members and student residents. Usually two or three faculty members, who had volunteered their services, were assigned to each hall. The program was unstructured but the idea was to have closer relationships evolve between faculty and students. The techniques used varied: usually the first association was established by the students inviting faculty members to lunch or dinner in their hall. Faculty members might then invite students to their own homes for informal get-togethers. Sometimes they planned excursions together: visits to exhibits,



Fowle: concerts, or plays--in fact, any kind of activity which helped break down barriers between students and faculty. In some of the halls faculty fellows taught their classes or held section meetings. The success of the program depended, of course, largely on how successful individual faculty members were in establishing a feeling of real understanding and interest with the students in their particular halls.

For a long time, Professor Woodbridge Bingham of the History Department served as coordinator between the two groups, and was the leading spirit behind the program.

Since my retirement, I have not kept up with it or its progress.

#### Loans and Scholarships

Another area that was new to the Dean of Students office was our involvement in administering the NDEA loans--National Defense Education Act loans. We set up an office primarily to handle these loans. Actually, the special services branch of our office was already there. It had been established originally to handle draft deferments and related matters. For a while before the country's increasing involvement in Vietnam, it wasn't a very active time for such matters. I wish I could say the same for now, but I'm sure it must again be a very large part of the work of Special Services taking care of draftees--writing letters to draft boards about students and certifying their being in college and meeting requirements for deferment.

Nathan: Even before the NDEA became effective, was the Dean's office active in determining recipients for scholarships and grants?



Towle: To some extent, yes. I recall that Mrs. Quire sat on the scholarship committee for many years, along with other members of the faculty. It was a fairly large committee and it was responsible for going over all the individual applications of students applying for scholarships. It became such a tremendously large undertaking that the system was changed eventually. It is more or less computerized now, I think. Also, the use of various testing services has simplified the work. Just as in the case of the NDEA, certain criteria are set up by scholarship boards. The scholarship and the loan programs are entirely separate and distinct. Our involvement in the scholarship program consisted chiefly in having a member of our staff, either the Dean of Students or Dean of Women, sit on the scholarship committee. I served for three or four years just before I retired.

The loan program is administered by the office of the Dean of Students. This includes those coming under NDEA.

Nathan: These were federal funds?

Towle: These were federal funds, yes.

Nathan: So this would be handled entirely apart from the state scholarships or alumni scholarships?

Towle: Yes, yes, that's right. There is liaison between the two determining committees, but that is all. Each makes its independent decisions.

Our office also handled all types of other financial aids, including temporary loans and a limited number of outright gifts.



Special Programs

Nathan: Isn't there a special program to bring underprivileged students to the campus?

Towle: Yes. I understand it has accomplished a good deal. I was Dean of Students when Professor Owen Chamberlain was chairman of the committee for the Special Opportunity Scholarship Program.

Nathan: Of course, and also Professor Mark Rosenzweig, wasn't he in it?

Towle: Yes. That was the forerunner of the present committee, I'm sure. And I assigned George Murphy, who was an assistant dean in our office, to work with the committee after being asked by the committee if our office could help out. He is now Dean of Students at San Diego. He is another one who has moved on to bigger things.

Nathan: You train them well here.

Towle: I was very pleased that the office was asked to help out, especially in such an important and far-reaching undertaking.

Nathan: Now, when you're asked to help out on something like this, what does that mean?

Towle: I think one reason they wanted someone from the Dean of Students office was because of our customary liaison with the Admissions Office, for example, and the availability of student records, and also because--well, actually, there was a feeling, I'm sure, that here would be a person who was more or less permanently assigned and could take this on as a direct and long-range assignment. George Murphy acted as secretary for the committee for quite a long time, and worked very closely with committee members. Of course, we had to rearrange his schedule of time in the office and relieve him of other assignments so that he could take this on.



Towle: The same thing happened with the Education Abroad Program.

Nathan: I didn't realize that.

Towle: The Education Abroad Program is, as I'm sure you know, a statewide affair. When it was approved by the Regents, President Kerr was very eager to have this program expedited. Each campus is expected to provide personnel who can work with the program. It has always been under the aegis of the Santa Barbara campus, the chairman being a member of the Santa Barbara faculty.

Here again the Berkeley committee approached our office and asked if we could supply a staff member to work with the committee. I asked Dr. William McCormick to take on this project. He was at that time one of the assistant deans; later an Associate Dean of Students. Of course the program has grown and grown. Now it is practically a full-time job. Bill McCormick's title in addition to that of Associate Dean is Coordinator of the Education Abroad Program for the Berkeley Campus. That means that he not only travels around to the various foreign colleges and universities which are part of the program, but also meets and works with the coordinators from the other campuses.

Nathan: So, when a new program develops, they turn to someone in the Dean of Students office.

Towle: It certainly has worked out that way if the program seems to tie in with the work of the Dean of Students office. All of these programs, it seemed to me, did and I was delighted that the office had this kind of rapport with faculty committees of real importance. And it was equally good for the faculty to realize that our staff members were so able and competent.



A Clearinghouse for Information

Nathan: It is interesting to hear about the various aspects of the Dean's office.

Towle: Well, you see, this is what I think most people don't recognize: all the things we are involved in, in addition to the daily, every-day relationships with students.

Nathan: What were you interviewing students about every day?

Towle: You'd be surprised what students will come in to see you about. The Dean of Students office often is a clearinghouse, in a sense, for a great many questions that students have, running the whole gamut of student interests--permits for meetings, petitions for leaves, requests for temporary loans and financial assistance, to mention a few. Or they come in about their academic programs.

I mentioned that the Dean of Students office is not really responsible for the academic programs of the students. But we have always acted in a liaison position with the deans of the colleges if it seemed necessary. For instance, sometimes a student would flunk out of college; well, he knew he couldn't get back in right away, but he might be terribly disturbed about what to do in the meantime or about when he could return. He'd been to see the dean of the college. He'd been taking extension courses, or he'd been doing this, that or the other thing. Then he'd say, "I don't know whether this is going to be accepted or not." (This is an example I just picked out of the air. I can think of this happening a good many times.) I know I used to say, "Do you want me to find out for you? I'd be glad to find out if this is possible. Then you must go and make your own arrangements with the dean of the college."

Our idea was that we weren't a crutch. The purpose was to help the student help himself get



Fowle: the best that he could out of his college career without undue delay because of lack of information. After all, that's what they should be doing; they're certainly not children any longer. But a lot of them do ask for some guidance and they are relieved to find a friendly ear to listen to them in such a big place, and to give them some of the answers to their queries.

At the beginning of every semester, when I was Dean of Women, I sent out letters to every new student and to the parents of the students saying we were available and wanted the student to know we were available and would be happy to see her and her parents. We used to see a great many parents. This later on was done by the men, too. When I became Dear of Students the pattern had been pretty well established. I don't know that this is exactly the way it's done now with the numbers of students and with the quarter system. I don't think it could be, because you'd hardly get the letters out before the quarter would be over. Also students and parents, too, now undoubtedly would consider this an example of "in loco parentis."

But what we tried to do, with varying success, was to have as close a personal relationship with the students as it was possible to do in such a large and complicated campus. And we worked very closely with the deans of the colleges.

We had an excellent rapport, for instance, with the Dean of the College of Letters and Science about students who might be having difficulties of one sort or another with their programs. There were many times I can remember being called by the Dean of the College of Letters and Science asking if I could give any information which might be considered extenuating circumstances for a student who was about to be dismissed for scholarship deficiencies. The deans were seeking to deal as fairly with the students as possible. They felt quite properly that the Dean of Students office might be a place where they could get some help in this respect because we at least had access to personnel records and very often information which



Towle: would be helpful in determining action, say, on a student's petition. We never gave out personal or "privileged" information without a student's permission, but we might have casual information based on personal observation which might prove useful not only to the dean of the college, but to the student himself.

Nathan: This does explain more of the staff's attitude.

Towle: Then, of course, we worked with student organizations.

Nathan: You do have one special person dealing with organizations?

Towle: Yes, with the student organizations it was one assistant dean, a woman. We've had two or three different ones by now. They've always been young and attractive women assistant deans, the kind that the men and the women would enjoy talking with. She has worked with them on their social programs, if they requested her to. Often they were a little doubtful as to how to proceed and wanted suggestions.

Nathan: Were these the groups under the ASUC?

Towle: A lot of them were, yes. But they could be living groups, too. I don't know whether this kind of assistance has gone out of style these past three years. I suspect a good many things have.

Nathan: I can see how organized students would have some sort of ready-made channel to the dean's office.

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: How did unorganized students manage?

Towle: I think I mentioned this earlier. This was one of the things that used to worry me very much as Dean of Women and then later as Dean of Students. I was particularly concerned about the student who came to the campus--the commuting student. There were several attempts made to establish student commuter councils and things of that nature where they would meet, for instance, just as other groups did, with



Towle: a representative from our office.

As I look back on it, I wish the whole program might have been more--I don't know if effective is the right word because heaven knows we tried hard enough. I recall one of the assistant deans who worked very hard with the independent commuters group. I think she was able to accomplish quite a bit especially in getting the confidence of the group and establishing rapport. Beyond that, however, I know she didn't feel that she had accomplished much. Possibly that was enough. Who knows?

There are, of course, some students who are not interested in having any kind of association with the campus. One reason some of them commute is that they like the feeling of complete independence and non-involvement.

#### Part-Time Assistant Deans in Various Programs

Another important member of the Dean of Students' staff, whom we haven't mentioned before, is the Foreign Student Adviser. I believe it was the year I became Dean of Students that he became a member of the Dean of Students' office, with the rank of associate dean of students. He was then, and is now, Sheridan Warrick, who had taught on the Davis campus for several years before he came to Berkeley.

He wears another hat, of course, which is entirely apart from any connection with the Dean of Students office--that of Executive Director of International House. In that position he is responsible to the Board of Directors of the House. I won't attempt to go into the various ramifications of his two positions, but I did want to point out his direct relationship with the office of the Dean of Students. When I retired in 1965, Mr. Warrick had



Towle: assigned to him, as part of the Foreign Student Adviser's staff, three full-time assistant deans of students with the working title of Assistant Foreign Student Adviser. They all maintained their offices in International House, but were in every administrative sense members of the office of the Dean of Students.

In addition to full-time staff members, we also had three part-time assistant deans, who were members of the regular faculty. During my tenure as Dean, the first appointment of a minority faculty member as assistant dean was arranged, which pleased me very much.

Nathan: What was his faculty position?

Towle: He was then an assistant professor of Social Welfare, Andrew Billingsley. He did a wonderful job for us in the year or year and a half he was there. For many years there had been at least two other faculty members serving as part-time assistant deans.

Professor Eric Bellquist of the Political Science department, has been an assistant dean for I don't know how many years. Then Armin Rappaport, professor of history, was also a part-time assistant dean for several years. Thomas Barnes, also professor of history, was appointed to take Dr. Rappaport's place on our staff during the latter's leave of absence. You saw his name mentioned in the Hierich dissertation.

Nathan: Yes, he was the one who went out to debate with the FSM leaders on one occasion.

Towle: Yes, that's right. Because of his faculty status, we felt that he could possibly get closer to the students than some of the rest of us. Of course, the Dean of Students, by virtue of being a dean, and the Dean of Women and the Dean of Men, are members of the Academic Senate, have academic status. That's provided for in the rules of the Academic Senate.

Nathan: So really, the question was whether people on the next level should be.



Towle: Yes, the associates. I could see where there were too many difficulties involved in conferring academic status on them, though it was discussed. I was satisfied with the progress that we had made at that particular time, and I didn't think it was that important to push any farther than we did to get academic recognition for them. But it is something that whcever is Dean of Students should always keep in mind, and want to keep in mind: the recognition that the younger members of the staff get, because they work awfully hard, they really do. They have tremendous responsibilities. Certainly they did all the four years that I was there as Dean of Students. I think that people should have proper recognition and salaries commensurate with their responsibilities, and all the other prerogatives.

We did have an excellent, well-trained staff who worked very well together and who were all deeply committed to the welfare of the individual student in a growing and complex student-body, which often was looked upon as impersonal from sheer force of numbers. We looked for ways to break down that impersonality and feeling of isolation experienced by many of the younger undergraduates who were always among the chief concern of everyone in our office. We knew that feeling existed. It was one of the things we tried very hard to help overcome, but there's just so much that one can do. No one on the staff ever counted hours and if work was to be done, it was always undertaken cheerfully and gladly.

#### A Personnel Dean's Working Hours

I might just say, as an aside, that for personnel deans, nights and weekends are often just an extension of other workdays, because we used to be involved in all sorts of things at night and on the weekends. You have very little time to yourself,



Towle: really, but you know that when you go into this kind of work.

Nathan: You really don't work the forty-hour week?

Towle: You don't work the forty-hour week, no.

Nathan: Is that a drawback in recruiting?

Towle: No, I think not, because people who are in this field understand what it's all about, and that your time has to be flexible. You hope that they have compensatory time off, but you're not sure that they do, and usually they don't. But there again you don't treat them like children. If they're the head of the office they set their own pace and do the work that they're expected to do and that's that. If you want a forty-hour week you don't go into student personnel work.

Nathan: This probably seems self-evident to you but this is rather a new idea to me. I certainly do remember seeing deans here and there at odd hours, but I just didn't put it together.

Towle: For the students themselves, quite aside from other things, their social affairs so many times occur on the weekends. The deans would be invited to participate in many of these. Lots of times you might prefer to do something else that you yourself had thought up, but on the other hand this was one way that you got to know the students, seeing them in their own surroundings. Consequently, we believed it to be one of the valuable ways we could help break down any feeling of impersonality. If we participated in the things they invited us to, this gave them the feeling, and quite properly so, that we were interested, or we wouldn't have come.

Nathan: Yes, I can see the value of that. Was there any chaperonage aspect to this?

Towle: No. You were asked to be patrons of some of their dances. I think that's all gone out the window now. In the residence halls there were patrons and patronesses, but we never thought of ourselves as chaperones in that sense.



Nathan: You had no real duty other than to go to the party?

Towle: No, we went to the party and would stay and meet the students and their guests, and take part to a limited degree. We didn't stay all evening. It was just another small way in which we could get to know some of the students. As we had more residence halls and more places for students to live on campus, this kind of casual relationship with students seemed increasingly important.

Nathan: It's certainly a courteous gesture.

Towle: It is a very small thing but it's part of the whole picture.

I think you've gathered that I was enormously proud of a very fine staff, and had every reason to be. They certainly gave me unfailing support and very wise and helpful advice and assistance; especially that long last year, 1964-65, before I retired. And I think we were a team in the very best sense of the word. I shall never forget the contributions each one made to our common purpose. I'm glad to have a chance to get this on the record.

During this time (1962-65), the staff was composed of twenty-eight so-called "senior" members. These included the Dean of Students, Dean of Men, Dean of Women, four associate and twelve assistant deans of students, an assistant to the dean, the Supervisor of Housing Services, Foreign Student Adviser, and Supervisor of Special Services. Four or five administrative assistants were also counted as senior staff. Needless to say, we were spread out in places other than the central office in Sproul Hall. Altogether, it was quite an operation.

While I was Dean of Students, the day-to-day working relationships with the other personnel services were strengthened, I think. For example, members of the counselling staff under Barbara Kirk's leadership and members of our office, the Dean of Students office, met frequently to discuss matters of mutual concern and interest, and just to become better acquainted personally, which we felt



Towle: was very important. Our office also enjoyed close rapport with those of the deans of the academic colleges and professional schools. We all benefitted from being, as we all used to say, on the same party line. [Laughter] It really was a help. I don't mean to say that I take entire credit for this, but I did try to strengthen this kind of relationship.

### Professional Associations

Nathan: You really reached out.

Towle: Yes, we did reach out because we felt it was exceedingly important to have the staff of the Dean of Students office better known and to have others on campus understand better what we were trying to do. I don't know that everybody always understood what we were trying to do, but we tried hard to make it possible for them to. Then, as Dean of Students I attended annual meetings, as a representative from the University, of such associations as the National Association of Personnel Administrators, the American College Personnel Association, and the Western College Personnel Institute.

The fact that as Dean of Women I had served a two-year term as president of the National Association of Women Deans and Counselors, from 1957 to 1959, also added national stature to my position first as Dean of Women and later as Dean of Students, and consequently brought prestige to the student personnel program at Berkeley and to the dean's office itself. In those two years that I was president of the Women Deans' Association, I came to know a great many women who were involved in the same sort of work that I was and also met a good many of the men who were in these other associations that I've mentioned.

One thing that I was particularly interested in reading recently, an idea that had developed



Towle: while I was national president of NAWDC, has apparently done very well and it's come to fruition in the last few years. This was the idea of forming an Interassociation Coordinating Committee, known as IACC, composed originally of three other national associations, concerned chiefly with personnel work in institutions of higher learning. Its purpose was to study and unify as far as possible the ideas and programs in the student personnel field in an attempt to prevent proliferation of efforts and energies and to have the programs in these various personnel associations known to the membership so that we all wouldn't be working at tangents, we'd be working together rather than at cross purposes.

Nathan: When you were president of the Association, did you find that this took a good deal of energy and attention?

Towle: Oh, yes. And I want to say that the University was very generous, because being president of the NAWDC is really a big job. We have an executive secretary who does all of the administrative work, in Washington, D.C. She has an office in the NEA building there. But, on the other hand, there is a great deal that the president is expected to do from the policy making end of things. It's one reason, I think, that the NAWDC is an especially strong association. At one time it only had university deans. Now it has people who are in high school, junior high school, and in junior colleges. It is predominantly slanted, still, toward universities and colleges. I think it probably always will be. For these groups of associations that I mentioned, in 1964, I think it was, the name was changed from IACC--the Interassociation Coordinating Committee--to the Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education, known as COSPA. As I understand it there are now eight autonomous associations as part of this group. It's grown from the original four. Don't ask me to go into what the eight names are at this point; I'd have to look them up. But it has received endorsement and encouragement from the American Council on Education. I think it



Towle: really is, now, pretty much of a going concern. It had a kind of a feeble start, but there have been some very good people who have been chairmen of the group, both men and women, who have helped greatly in this. We didn't want a program just for women. We felt it was important that it should cover the whole area of student personnel work.

Both A Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs  
and a Dean of Students?

Towle: This is a little disjointed, I suppose, but it still has bearing on the relations of student personnel work within an institution itself. The question of whether it is good administration to have both a Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and a Dean of Students concerns many institutions as well as the persons involved. I'm trying to be objective when I make these remarks.

Where there is such a Vice-Chancellor there should be a clearly understood definition of his responsibilities and an appropriate delegation of authority to the heads of the several student personnel divisions which come under his purview. He should assist in policy making in consultation with these officers and consequently assume responsibility for the interpretations of policies which affect the student community. He necessarily speaks for the chief campus officer in student personnel matters; he must therefore have a broad unbiased, impartial view of all segments of the student population and their interests and needs. One of the prime sources of information concerning such matters is the student services, whose staff members are in daily association with the student community.

There are several institutions that do provide both a Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and a Dean of Students, such as we have here. The



Towle: University of Michigan did for a long time, until they finally did away with the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs as such; they reorganized their whole student personnel program in some other way.

But, as I started to say, in an administrative structure where there is a Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and a Dean of Students, the drawbacks for the Dean of Students are, I think, obvious. It removes him, for instance, from direct accessibility to the chief campus officer and often from policy making functions. And yet his office is actually what I have called the nerve center of the student community. He becomes an administrator and enforcer of regulations which he may have had no part in promulgating. His removal from easy and direct access and responsibility to the chief campus officer can work to the detriment, I think, of each. Now, this may seem a minor point, but I'm not so sure it is so minor; I think it's a pretty important one.

I always have been a little uncomfortable in any situation that is dependent entirely on personal relationships. Things should be so structured that there's no question about whose responsibilities are what. This can be a drawback in this kind of situation.

Nathan: Should lines be more carefully delineated?

Towle: This might be at least part of the answer. Other institutions have faced or are facing the same sort of dilemma with respect to this administrative structure. Possibly, as I mentioned earlier, the complexities of a large heterogeneous campus such as Berkeley with its historical background and concept of more or less independent component parts within the total student personnel area--and I don't think we can ever forget that here because they all are very independent, they always have been--the registrar's office, the admissions office, the health service and so on--require the appointment of a Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs whose chief function is to bring together in harmony a working team of student personnel administrators



Towle: responsible directly to him for the proper functioning of their respective areas, and then, of course, through him to the chief campus officer. That's the ideal if you're going to have this kind of structure.



Katherine A. Towle was president of the National Association of Women Deans and Counselors, 1957-59. She and other past presidents were asked to contribute to a symposium, with brief papers printed in the Association's Journal, Vol. 29, No. 3, Spring 1966. Her article appears on pages 101-103.

### Comments on the Berkeley Situation

*KATHERINE A. TOWLE, 1957-59*

FROM THE SILENT generation of the fifties, we have come full circle to the articulate and activist generation of the sixties. The lesson of Berkeley is that the effect of student commitment to social justice and political freedom should never again be misjudged.

Youth has always shown dissatisfaction with the world, but today's pressures seem much greater and more consequential. That the approach and interest of youth usually are sincere is not in question; but whether a university campus is the proper platform from which to launch these programs is open to debate.

From last year's situation at Berkeley evolved evidence of the fragile structure of the university itself. There was no clearcut statement of university purposes and policy upon which one could rely; no common or joint standard of values. Consequently, the administration and faculty were equally guilty of ambivalence. "Divide and conquer" served the student protestors well for they alone had a plan of action and a "cause." Free speech was not really at issue, but it did present an appealing standard around which to rally forces and sympathy, especially from the press.

That an institution must clearly state both its educational goals and policies and its expectations of how the campus community should achieve them becomes more and more apparent. No university worthy of the name can exist without continuing self-evaluation.

Feelings of bewilderment, then of guilt and shame were shown by many Berkeley faculty members who had given student affairs short shrift on past occasions. Overcome by their own shortcomings, many set out to prove that they were after all on the "side of the angels" and joined students in blaming everything on an already bumbling administration. One lesson learned from this is how great the need is for reliance on a unity of purpose among faculty, administration, and students based on mutual trust and goodwill, with each segment bearing a share of responsibility for

As the crisis developed, higher echelons at statewide and campus levels took over the direction of the Berkeley campus position. Many of us (e.g., dean of students' staff) who logically should have been consulted about methods and vital issues were all too often either forgotten, overlooked, or bypassed. All of the students, not just those involved in the protests, soon realized that the dean of students, who traditionally stood as a symbol of authority and an advocate in student affairs, had little or no power of determination. This demoralized a competent personnel staff who by training, experience, and basic interest should have been allowed to deal constructively with students. It was demoralizing to many students, too.

The entire educational program needs to be reappraised without prejudice. Today's students are smart and knowledgeable. They are not impressed with poorly taught, uninspired "old hat" lectures for which they can buy Fybate Notes.

*In loco parentis* has little place in today's institutions. Students should be given responsibility for governing themselves, with deans acting as advisers only. Personnel programs should reflect the knowledge that the ideological gap between generations is great.

Personnel deans must have a clear mandate from the institution as to their position, authority, and function. They must insist upon equal status with faculty colleagues and should hold comparable degrees in substantial academic study.

We should expect students—and they should know it—to show to us the same consideration with respect to good manners, self-discipline, and self-restraint that they have a right to expect from us. Communication, mutual respect, and goodwill are essential. These are earned by hard work and common goals. Student voice in policy does not extend to turning over to them the educational or personnel programs for their own uses.

Out of the Berkeley crisis I believe good things are evolving: a greater awareness of student thinking, the students' hopes and aspirations as well as their frustrations, disappointments, and prejudices; more student participation in rule-making with a deeper sense of responsibility; constructive educational reforms; better communication and rapport among the segments of campus life; more effective and responsible student government with emphasis on self-government; and a greater respect for law and order and for the legitimate



## PERSPECTIVE ON THE FSM (FREE SPEECH MOVEMENT)

Towle: This seems a good place to refer to Max Hierich's comment on the relationship between the office of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and the office of the Dean of Students. [See Hierich citation on page 201.] One comment Mr. Hierich makes in his dissertation is that this particular kind of setup actually removes the Dean of Students from direct contact with the Chancellor. To be specific, I was more or less required (because that was the way the office was expected to work) to go through the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs to the Chancellor. I reported to the former, so to speak. I was not a member of the Chancellor's staff.

The other persons who presumably were responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs were the heads of the other personnel services, like the counseling center, the admissions office, the student placement center, and health services. Theoretically, the evolution of the office of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs sounds quite logical, but it does have built-in administrative drawbacks, which I have tried to point out.

Nathan: At the time of the FSM the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs was Alex Sherriffs?

Towle: Yes. Alex Sherriffs is, as you know, professor of psychology, now on leave, I assume. But he was at that time, also, and had been for several years (I've forgotten how many, I think it was five or six), Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs. I think he saw his position--certainly it worked out that way in my estimation--as being far more concerned about the activities of the Dean of Students office and in far closer touch with that office, because he made it his business to be, than with any of the other personnel services.



No Authority to Change Policies

Nathan: I suppose, in a way the Dean of Students office is not a personnel service in quite the way that the others are.

Towle: Well, it is different because it is more all-encompassing. The Dean of Students office is really the nerve center of student activities and relationships. Part of the difficulty between the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and my office was one of relationship. Dr. Sherriffs and I got along well personally and enjoyed working together most of the time. But I had no authority of my own to change policies. I always had to go through somebody to see if I could change or do this, that, or the other thing, except for very minor administrative matters.

For instance, at the beginning of the FSM when the students presented to me their petition with seven points concerning the use of the Bancroft-Telegraph strip, five of them that were perfectly simple points that had to do with--oh--traffic regulation and the position of posters and tables in the plaza. That was something I didn't have to go to anybody about. I just said, "Certainly. These are things that I can tell you right now. We (meaning the students and myself) will work this out to our mutual satisfaction, I'm sure."

But the last two dealt with basic University policies: the collection of funds for political activities, and the advocacy on campus of political stands. These two things were at that time prohibited by University regulations. I, as Dean of Students, did not have the authority to change those regulations. I would have liked nothing better than to have had that privilege. I myself believed they were restrictive. It wasn't a matter of my knowledge about them legally, because all of these regulations had been gone over for the President by a professor of law at Boalt Hall. The President, after all, had issued these regulations over his



Towle: name so they must have been looked over by somebody with legal training and knowledge of University policy.

I did on several occasions, point out how inconsistent some of the rules seemed to me and how difficult it was for me, as Dean of Students, to try to administer some of them. Not only did some seem somewhat inconsistent, but also ambiguous and open to different kinds of interpretation. I did ask for guidelines several times, simply because they were not clear. Now there are many fewer rules. The time, place and manner rules are much better; more equitable and much easier to administer than the rules were in--oh, I guess it was about 1960 or 1961, until the rules were changed in the spring of 1965.

Nathan: One thing did show up, I thought, in your interview with Max Hierich: it appeared that many times you were not at liberty to do any negotiation. Was it that you could state a position but couldn't negotiate?

Towle: I could not negotiate with the students on those crucial matters in the fall of 1964. This was one of the things that was so frustrating to me during that time: that I personally could not negotiate with the students, and yet I knew many of those students better than anyone else in the University administration at that time. Needless to say, I couldn't possibly know all of them well, some not even casually, but I did know who many of them were and their special interest groups because they had to come into our office to register their groups and give us the names of their officers and all of that kind of procedural business, so I had a direct knowledge of many of them. One or two of them, like Jackie Goldberg, I had known rather well.

I'd known Jackie since she was a freshman. She was active not only in campus activities, but also in her sorority. She is a very intelligent, concerned girl and a very articulate one. She speaks well and she puts her ideas across. I always respected Jackie's frankness and her ideas; I didn't



Towle: always agree with her. But then she knew I didn't and she didn't agree with me. We were on perfectly friendly terms: the kind of terms you like to have with students. But this was cut off for me when the FSM took to the hustings. With the exception of one or two discussions with Jackie, who sought me out, I couldn't deal on fundamental things directly with the students. They lost confidence as a result and a hostility developed which saddened me very much.

Nathan: So it was partly a result of the structure, in which you had to go through the Vice-Chancellor.

Towle: Yes, partly that.

Nathan: And partly the individual personalities of incumbents at that time.

Towle: In a way, yes, but I want very much to be fair. It was by no means one-sided. I think in the way Dr. Sherriffs primarily saw his job, the Dean's office was far more important to him than any of the other student personnel offices and he concentrated on our office, sometimes almost exclusively. He may not agree with this, but to me this was the way it always seemed.

Nathan: But all these other services did not interest him?

Towle: It's not that they didn't interest him, but the Dean of Students was the nerve center. This was the thing that concerned him most and I think this is why the emphasis always was on the activities of the Dean of Students office. I used to get awfully annoyed when the students would go chasing over to see Dr. Sherriffs because they knew that I had to report to him rather than make some of the decisions myself. Some of the students got the idea that they'd get more if they ran right over to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs. This was not a good situation for the Dean of Students to be in.

Nathan: No, one would think that he'd send them back to you through the channel.



Towle: Oh, he did when he thought of it, but then he'd forget. [Laughter] This was nothing personal, really, it was just the way he operated. And I guess it was the way I operated, too.

### Administrative Relationships

Nathan: I was interested in your saying, when you were in the Marines--when you went back to serve--you specified that you wanted to have direct access to the Commandant.

Towle: This was exactly the same type of thing because during the war we had had to go through the Director of Personnel at Marine Corps Headquarters. And it made another step. In other words, we were just one more removed from the Commandant or the top person. In anything that was as important as the women's organization and new to the Marine Corps, particularly when I was being considered for director of the women in the regular service, I felt I just couldn't go back unless this thing was settled so that I did have direct access to the Commandant. As I indicated earlier, this happened. It was set up pretty much the way that I had suggested that it be set up. I think the Marine Corps understood this, so that I was exactly on the same level as the heads of the Commandant's staff, which were personnel, policy planning, supply, and all that kind of thing. And I might add all were generals! I sat with them in their weekly conferences with the Commandant as an equal, and not somebody down here who had to go through some of these other people. Now that doesn't mean I didn't work with all the others on problems that pertained to the women in their areas. With some of them, of course, I had nothing to do whatever, because the women weren't involved in their areas. But it did mean that there was this kind of direct relationship with the Commandant. Now, there was an assistant



Towle: Commandant, certainly, and naturally I took up matters with him first. I didn't just wander in--don't get the idea I wandered into the Commandant's office. Neither I nor anybody else did. [Laughter] You don't do that sort of thing. I wouldn't have wandered into the Chancellor's office all of the time, but it would have given me the feeling of a closer association.

It is my understanding from talking with various people now, and particularly with Dean [Arleigh] Williams and Dean [Betty] Neely that Vice-Chancellor Boyd does see his position as a kind of overall coordinator. He's there and they do go to him to keep him advised, but he sees the position in his own way. He's just as much interested, for instance, in all of the other personnel services that go into making up the student personnel group.

Nathan: So here the structure hasn't changed.

Towle: No, this is the interesting thing. The emphasis has changed but the structure itself remains.

Nathan: Of course that would mean that with a different personality in, again, the old pattern could happen again.

Towle: Yes, that's right. I personally don't like structures which are dependent on personality. I think it's a bad thing, bad in the sense that it leaves room for too many uncertainties and inconsistencies. I'm trying not to be unfair to Dr. Sherriffs. I don't want to be. I just think he saw the position quite differently in many aspects than I did. His own personal concerns, because of his interest in individual students--and there's no doubt about it, he was sincerely interested in the students, in their problems, in their ASUC activities and so on and his concentration on them, led him to assess things differently than Mr. Boyd does, or so it seems to me, at this point.



The Bancroft-Telegraph Strip

Nathan: You were saying that a note had come to your desk from Dr. Sherriffs with respect to the problem of the strip.

Towle: Yes, Bancroft and Telegraph.

Nathan: Would that sort of query normally arise in his office, or would it be the sort of thing that the Dean of Students office would generate?

Towle: Well, you see, Dr. Sherriffs was quite critical of me, I think, as Dean of Students at that particular point, because he felt that I had not been doing anything about that area. In the first place, the traffic, yes, it was getting bothersome, because people were finding it hard to get in and out of the entrance without falling over tables and posters and all of that kind of paraphernalia, and I brought this to the students' attention two or three times that spring. But, to me with many other things to be taken care of, it didn't seem that important. Everybody else, as I've told you some place, I think, said they didn't know that the strip in question was even University property. Ten feet of city property and twenty-six feet of University property.

Nathan: You measured it?

Towle: Oh, I measured it. I went out with my little tape measure and measured it one night. [Laughter] It's twenty-six feet. This is a very interesting thing that Max Hierich points out, how the architectural setup of the new student union lent itself, in a way, to what happened later. Instead of putting the posts out at the end of the property, they were put back, so the only thing that was there to indicate that it was University property were those two plaques which say "Property of the Regents of the University of California."



Towle: After all, I've been on the campus so long that I'm used to seeing those little bronze plaques. There's one right out here going into the Fernwald Road outside my own home, which says "Property of the Regents of the University of California." I know it has something to do with eminent domain. When I was in college, the Regents had to close the campus off one day a year in order to maintain their right of eminent domain.

Nathan: Oh, yes, and there was a discussion about Gayley Road, whether it was going to be closed, at one time.

Towle: That's right. So this was just for background material. But I knew that that property was University property. I also knew the students were out on it. All I needed to do was stand up and look out of my office window and I could see them. When I couldn't see them I could hear them, but it didn't bother me, and I didn't attach much importance to it. I must say quite honestly I never thought of it in relation to the extension out there of the campus rules.

It had been there for quite a long time. I inherited it in 1961, in July, when I became acting Dean of Students, and then, of course, when I was made Dean of Students in January, 1962, I still had the strip. As a matter of fact I really didn't think about it very much or very often. When I did, I thought it was good that we had a place like that because it did give some of the students, who were getting more and more active, especially in a political year, a place to be seen and be heard. It was kind of messy out there, but you know, nobody ever really bothered about it before.

Nathan: Back when the campus rules were very much more restrictive, when political advocacy of any kind was not permitted on campus, do you remember how meetings used to be held right outside Sather Gate?

Towle: That's right. You see, that was finally changed, I think it was changed because of the appearance of Adlai Stevenson. He had to speak outside on the street, but the students were all gathered on the



Towle: Inside listening to him because of the traffic problems at Sather Gate.

Nathan: And also at the West Gate.

Towle: And the West Gate. This just was too ridiculous, having a man of the calibre of Stevenson have to address students from the street with thousands of students sitting on the campus listening.  
Really!

Nathan: As you were saying, too, the idea of an adjacent, open area had real value.

Towle: Yes. But as I said earlier, I really didn't think of it too much. I did not know, and I can say this quite without equivocation, I did not know until Dr. Sherriffs told me some time later, that students were going down to the city hall and getting permits for that area.

Nathan: From the city of Berkeley?

Towle: City of Berkeley. Permits for their tables, all of them were down there getting permits for their tables. Then what they did--they'd get the table permits and they'd just move the tables back on to the campus.

Nathan: The twenty-six feet.

Towle: Yes [Laughter] It was natural, you know.

Nathan: There is a funny, almost overlapping jurisdiction between the city of Berkeley and the University.

Towle: There was. That ten feet out there on the sidewalk wasn't too useful to many people because it was narrow and foot traffic was heavy there. It was good from one point of view because people practically fell into the donation cans. You couldn't help it. [Laughter] This whole thing--when I think back on it now it just seems so incredible that this should have happened over that twenty-six feet. Well, I don't say it all happened because of that, but that pulled the trigger certainly. Looking back, the



Towle: scene probably was pretty ripe for something. I think Max Hierich brings this out very well in his dissertation. He points out certain things that nobody thinks about in connection with an event, of course, until it has happened. But he does point out this architectural thing, when the new student union was built and how this in itself fed into this whole background, or at least provided part of the background for the sort of thing which erupted.

Nathan: Perhaps we should just give the name of his dissertation so that it will be on the tape.

Towle: By all means.

Nathan: This is the dissertation of Max Hierich, "Demonstrations at Berkeley: Collective Behavior during the Free Speech Movement in 1964-1965."

Towle: This is his Ph.D. dissertation at Berkeley, submitted in 1966.

Nathan: Right, Ph.D. dissertation for the department of sociology. I see Dwight Waldo was on his committee.

Towle: Yes, Neil Smelser, too.

Nathan: And Herbert Blumer.

Towle: It's long but it's a most interesting dissertation. Of course I was fascinated by some of this background material. I suppose it's really the way a sociologist would build it up. He understands the theory of crowds, the motivation of crowds, and all of the rest of it. I was fascinated by the way he gave the background and a great many other parts--before he ever gets into the FSM incident itself. He's laying the scene, more or less, for it, by certain things that happened or didn't happen. Any one interested in this period of University history would learn a lot from reading it. But the architectural aspect was one that stuck in my mind particularly, considering how important that became in my life.



Towle: I might call your attention to an important bit in this clipping. I remembered it and I went over it again and took out some quotations from it. This is the New York Times Magazine of February 14, 1965. It's this excellent article by A.H. Raskin. (He was assistant editor of the editorial page.) It's called "The Berkeley Affair: Mr. Kerr vs. Mr. Savio & Company."

Raskin: The Regents' Approval of Deeding the Strip to the City

Nathan: That's at least a bit witty in contrast to all the angry things that were said and written.

Towle: It's very good. I was looking for it especially because as I recall this was the first time I realized that the Regents had approved, during Chancellor Seaborg's tenure as Chancellor, the deeding of that controversial strip to the city of Berkeley, and nothing was done about it.

Nathan: The idea was approved but never enacted.

Towle: It was never enacted.

Nathan: Do you think the Raskin article is really an able treatment of the story?

Towle: I think it's an excellent article. Of course, this is just the beginning, it runs over several pages, back in here. I don't know where it goes from here.

Nathan: It starts on page 24.

Towle: I could do better if I put my glasses on. Wait a minute here. There. I think this is the end of it here, on page 88. I would consider it fairly objective, more objective than many of the articles that came out, and it had some interesting things.



Towle: Mr. Raskin did see Mario Savio and had an interview with him, and then he also went to Mr. Kerr's home and interviewed him at some length, apparently, after his interview with Savio. Right here is where President Kerr tells Mr. Raskin about the deeding of that property--or the approval of the Regents to have the property deeded. But apparently nothing was ever done about it.

Nathan: Oh, he got the Regents to agree that this strip ought to be turned over to the city of Berkeley for use as a public plaza?

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: (Reading from the article) "The treasurer never carried out the instructions to deed over the strip."

Towle: Dr. Kerr evidently foresaw the possibility of the strip becoming a source of trouble, according to the A.H. Raskin article, because there was no logical basis for exempting it from the "no politics" rule that applied everywhere else on the campus. Mr. Raskin states that President Kerr had persuaded the Regents in 1959 to deed it as a public plaza to the city of Berkeley, but for some unexplained reason, the appropriate administrative procedures were never put into motion.

I had forgotten it completely until I went back and looked over all my papers in connection with the fall of 1964 events. In the memorandum which Dr. Sherriffs sent to President Kerr on September 23, 1964, he outlines some of the background to this whole situation, which grew out of my memorandum of September 14. He starts out by saying to the President, "We are in the process of bringing about the enforcement of the position that we have taken regarding the area at Bancroft and Telegraph Avenues. We find our most difficult immediate problem to be communicating what would seem to be a very simple fact: namely, we do favor and encourage free expression and discussion. We have never, and do not now, condone the mounting of political or social action on campus facilities." Then he goes into this historical bit.



Towle: He mentions in here, during this historical background period, that campus rules were also being changed in the direction of greater freedom for speakers and for circulation of literature. I'm quoting now from Dr. Sherriffs' memorandum of September 23, 1964, to President Kerr: "A political candidate's program was initiated and the open forum policy was begun. By June 1960...(this I hadn't heard of before) Chancellor Seaborg decided to drop the matter of negotiations with the city of Berkeley to take University land, stating: (and this is a quotation that apparently Dr. Sherriffs had from something of Dr. Seaborg's--I don't know what it was, it must have been a memorandum in the Chancellor's files), The reason for this is that developments during the current year, under the new presidential directives, (may I interject here, that year must have been '59-'60) about student activities and outside speakers on the campus make it appear that such arrangements may no longer be necessary." That's the end of the statement that Chancellor Seaborg apparently made in some memorandum, and I assume that, too, is or was somewhere in the Chancellor's files.

I didn't realize until I read the Raskin article--much later, of course--that there actually had been Regental approval for the strip to be deeded to the city of Berkeley. If the procedures had been carried through, the use of the Bancroft-Telegraph strip as a political arena in 1964 probably would never have arisen. It already would have been decided one way or another, even if the city of Berkeley had turned down the offer to accept it as a gift.

Nathan: It's a curious thought, if I'm interpreting it correctly, that all that the students wanted was to hear speakers. And surely in '59 and '60 the students could hear political candidates and speakers.

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: But then the thinking seems to have stopped.

Towle: That's right. The open forum gave them this chance. There was never any question about that. That is



Towle: why I always felt that placing so much emphasis on free speech in September, 1964, really was not the issue. "FSM" was more or less a catch-all phrase, as I think I've mentioned somewhere else. It would have been helpful though, in September, 1964, to have known more about the background of that strip!

Nathan: You would have thought that someone would have remembered somehow.

Towle: Wouldn't you! When anything as important as this had gone to the head office, it seems to me that somewhere along the line there ought to have been a notation of some sort so that if this ever came up again, someone would have remembered.

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: It should have been known and passed along to those of us most directly concerned.

Nathan: I wonder if it's possible that people do tend to forget those things they don't want to remember.

Towle: I don't know, I really don't know.

#### The Central File System and the Failure of Communication

Towle: What's the use of having all these opinions and getting all this information if you aren't going to remember about it? Or, better still, record it for the future.

I might add, somewhat bitterly, that if this is typical of a central file system, which exists in the top administrative offices, I am not very much impressed. Nobody caught this. Nobody! And I, in my innocence, and I will say it was innocence, had no way of knowing that these letters were sitting in somebody's file.



Nathan: No one who hasn't really dealt with them would be expected to know they were there. But I cannot understand why those who should remember them didn't.

Towle: No, I don't either, I really don't.

Nathan: It's as though you operate in discrete, separate worlds.

Towle: Yes, this was the thing. It's not any one person's fault, I suppose, but just one of those unfortunate administrative breakdowns that should never have happened.

Nathan: Would you say that this is part of an administrative process that somehow hasn't developed adequately?

Towle: It's not good administration, let's put it that way. In fact, it's very poor administration. The wheels certainly didn't go around somewhere. If you are responsible for running anything as important as the administrative structure of a campus, what has happened in the past is almost as important as the present. Somewhere your information has got to be available to you on a never-ending basis.

Nathan: Yes, a college generation is so short, either two or four years, so there's no real carryover on the students' part.

Towle: No, there's very little carryover on the students' part and we don't expect there to be. Every once in a while I used to bring myself up short thinking, "After all, why would he know? He wasn't here." When some question came up, maybe in connection with ASUC motions that were made and I'd heard them made many times before, I would think, "Well, these students don't know this, this is something new to them." It's the same way that some of the recommendations or the actions they would take which were terribly exciting to them and so new to them, you know, could be as old as the hills, but it was in a new framework and in a new college generation and to them it was completely new. This doesn't hold true, I guess, in the present generation



Towle: of students.

Nathan: But then, also, to find that the same situation obtains for the administration--that's another question entirely.

Towle: Yes, it is another question.

There is a lesson here, and believe me if I had this to do again, I'd not only want to go through every file myself in the Dean of Students office--although I thought I did that pretty carefully--but I'd also want to have somebody go through all of the files that anybody had pertaining to pertinent matters. Because so much that was important was stowed away, and apparently completely forgotten or overlooked.

Nathan: Exactly. Just as though all this good thinking had never happened.

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: In a way I think it might be hard for a dean to present herself to the Chancellor's office and say, "I'd like to go through your files."

Towle: I think it would have been. [Laughter]

Altogether, there were at least three important things that would have helped if we had had a carry-over working for us, the possibility of that strip being turned over to the city being one of them. The other two, I'll go into later.

Nathan: Of course, the question of the architecture was interesting. In addition, were you implying a change in student attitudes?

Towle: As I was aware, students, especially in the 1960's, had less desire to have older persons involved in their affairs, and yet I never had the feeling they didn't welcome our assistance when they chose to seek it. My own ideas, certainly, about in loco parentis changed considerably from the time I was Dean of Women to the time I became the Dean of



Towle: Students. The generations and student mores were changing. The whole 1950 college generation was so different from the 1960 college generation.

In the 1950's they were more--I've always objected to "apathetic," because I don't think they were apathetic in the sense that people used to hang that word on them. It was a handy phrase meaning almost anything. Let's say instead that students then were less involved. Students of the 1960's became far more articulate and became far more aware of what was going on. Sputnik probably started it, and then came their involvement in Negroes' voting rights and the plight of the Negro that focused on Mississippi. This culminated in what we saw in 1964 in very definite awareness of what students considered their rights and privileges.

#### Graduate Students and the ASUC

Nathan: Do you think possibly the increase in the proportion of graduate students made a difference?

Towle: I am sure this did have a good deal to do with it, too. I think that one of the mistakes that was made on the Berkeley campus--and Max Hierich also brings this out--was the disenfranchisement of the graduate student.

Nathan: Right, in 1959.

Towle: Yes, in 1959. Because then we had a growing body of students. At that time, the feeling was as I had heard it discussed, that graduate students for the most part weren't interested in undergraduate affairs. They probably weren't in one sense, because they didn't have time to be; but as the undergraduate group became far more alert to what was going on outside the campus, the two came together much more closely than they ever had before.



Nathan: So it was a change in the undergraduates.

Towle: It was a changing undergraduate body, I think even more than it was a changing graduate student body. I could be wrong. But as I look back, I believe the undergraduates were changing their whole concept of looking at themselves as college students and as citizens of the world.

Nathan: Was the decision that graduate students not be a part of the ASUC made at the Chancellor's office? It was a vote, wasn't it?

Towle: It was a vote. To be very honest, I don't think that vote had too much validity. This happened before I became Dean of Students and I wasn't really involved in it at that time. I was busy being Dean of Women.

To get back to the graduate students, they took this poll at registration, as I recall. At one of the fall registrations, it apparently showed that the graduate students, by not a large majority certainly, but by a majority indicated they preferred to have a separate organization, or did not want to be a part of the ASUC.

Nathan: There was something to do with the fee.

Towle: That's right.

Nathan: And it wasn't clear whether they were saying, "We don't care to pay the fee," or "We don't care to belong to the ASUC."

Towle: Yes. It was because their fee was to be less than the fee for a regular undergraduates who had all the privileges of the union and all of the other things that undergraduates had at that time.

Towle: There seemed to be fear on the part of the administration that the graduate students were going to take over the running of the ASUC if they got in and were elected to all of the offices, for example. That is, provided they remained part of the ASUC. That's the only thing I can think of, that the ASUC would no longer be an undergraduate



Towle: organization, but would become more and more a mouthpiece for graduate students and for what they wanted. I really am not certain. This is just a theory on my part. I was not actively concerned when this poll was taken. I did not know the background. When I became Dean of Students, I didn't think of going back into the history of the disenfranchisement of the graduate students. It was an accomplished fact.

Then it came up again in 1963.

Nathan: Maybe '62...

Fowle: It may have been in '62. By that time I was pretty busy being a new Dean of Students! With all the new things I was facing, I really didn't spend too much time thinking about whether or not graduates should be in the ASUC. Sometime later I was told by Dr. Sherriffs, some of the background. I accepted it more or less as a fact. It didn't seem to me at that time terribly important, and I don't know that it was so terribly important except as it turned out later. Apparently, a feeling of ill-will had been harbored by many of the graduate students because of the way the poll had been conducted and also because of its inconclusiveness. Graduate students, of course, stay around a long time, and consequently have long memories. Graduate students go on and on, a lot of them. Many of those who became active in the 1964-65 FSM had been on the campus when all of this had taken place, apparently, several years before. It's the only thing I can think of.

#### Some Rules and Student Resentment

Nathan: Yes, that's right. There was a note about President Kerr's directive in 1959, the one they call the "Sandbox Government."



Towle: Yes. I don't recall what that particular directive was. But I think Max Hierich makes a very interesting projection of what happened there. It's worth noting. If we are going to make note of this at all--I mean the graduate students' disenfranchisement and the possible consequences later on, I think it might be well to refer to his dissertation, this part of his dissertation.

Nathan: That's a very good idea. He mentions, just very briefly, four points that he felt the students resented. One, the student government was responsible directly to the Chancellor's office and all their constitutions had to be adjusted to recognize that fact; two, that student governments were forbidden to speak on off-campus issues; three, that constitutional amendments (that would be to the ASUC Constitution) were subject to prior approval by campus officials; and, four, that recognized campus organizations needed faculty or senior staff advisers. In addition they had to make various declarations pointing out that they were not affiliated with partisan or religious groups--and that they did not have as one of their purposes advocacy on non-campus issues.

Towle: That's a pretty good summary of some of the basic rules under which it operated. The preamble to the ASUC Constitution at that time did say, "We, the students of the University of California Associated Students, recognizing..." and so forth and so on. The implication certainly is there that they were responsible to the administration of the campus on which they were located. I think this was a statewide requirement, not just at Berkeley.

Nathan: It may be since the advent of the reorganization when the statewide offices were set up in 1958.

Towle: Yes.

Nathan: The chancellors were established, and therefore there was a certain shift in control.

Towle: That's right. Actually, I find it a little hard to consider the ASUC completely separate from the



Towle: University itself. It seems to me that the ASUC is a part of the University just as any other department, in a sense, is a part of the University. But, you see, I also understand the students' position in this--it was hard for them to understand the administration's position.

The ASUC didn't collect the funds, but the funds that were collected were turned over to the ASUC for its use. For instance, when the building was being built, funds were collected for the building fund. And yet, there was this very important string attached to it, and to the young it made quite a lot of difference.

Nathan: It did so even in the earlier campus generations; you may remember that ASUC membership was at one time voluntary.

Towle: Yes, that's right. It was voluntary when I was in college.

Nathan: And when I was. In an interview for the Regional Oral History Office, Marguerite Kulp Johnston pointed out how bitterly they fought against making ASUC membership mandatory when she was an undergraduate during the early forties, because they felt, if it were mandatory, then the University administration quite rightly could say, "Because all students must join, there is a very close link to the administration." Whereas if membership were voluntary, the students would have more leeway. So many apparently felt that was a big break away from student control of the ASUC, when membership was made mandatory.

Towle: I don't remember when the ASUC became an non-voluntary association. But I know for years it was voluntary. Didn't it become non-voluntary as an association when there was a question of building the new student union?

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: I think this was the basis. There had to be some way of getting the necessary money to build the



Towle: student union, among other things, and to establish the programs which, apparently, it was felt the students wanted at that time.

Nathan: There was no question that a new student union was going to be built.

Towle: Was needed, yes. Because the old Stephens Union had become outgrown. It was probably well enough planned for student use when it was put up because the campus was relatively small. But it was such a hodgepodge of rooms when the campus became large that it had outlived its usefulness as a student activities building. There were lots of things about it that were attractive, but I don't think it was serving adequately the needs of the students.

Nathan: In summary, then, would it be your view that the fact that graduate students stay around a long time and have longer memories than undergraduates, and the disenfranchisement for one reason or another, in 1959, of the graduate students from the ASUC, and the mandatory ASUC fee, perhaps all had some influence on later developments?

Towle: Oh, yes. I don't think there's any question about it. When I read Max Hierich's dissertation I was particularly interested in his having gone into this as thoroughly as he did and his bringing out some of these things which, frankly, I hadn't even thought of. I had thought about the impact of the disenfranchisement because I was quite aware of that in the last two or three years that I was on the campus.

Nathan: Did the graduate students not come to the Dean of Students office very much?

Towle: No, they didn't and I think this was quite understandable. We helped all students with student loans and things of that sort. The graduate students could draw on student loan funds just the way undergraduates can, and the Dean of Students office administers most of these funds. Graduates came for emergency loans, for example, and they always came for their permits to have speakers and the like, as other students did. The rules applied to them.



Towle: But we didn't have many graduates coming to the office on personal matters and things of that sort because--well, many of them, of course, were associated much more closely with their own departments, which is quite proper. Furthermore, the Dean of the Graduate Division had a large staff, and although they dealt mostly with the academic programs, the students were free to go to them for information and assistance. They might be referred to us for one reason or another, but we didn't have too much daily association with graduate students.

Nathan: So you probably wouldn't have occasion to know individuals well.

Towle: No, I don't think we did. We might know a few. We had graduate students, graduate assistants we called them, in the residence halls, men and women, who undertook certain responsibilities in the halls in exchange for room and board. Chiefly, they assisted the head residents with the various programs in the halls. Those graduate students some of our staff became well acquainted with. But they were not the ones most active on campus because they didn't have time to do graduate studies and residence hall assignments and then get involved in political activity.

Nathan: Did you have any impression that ASUC activities were dwindling in appeal for the students as the years went by?

Towle: It fluctuated, to be honest. It depended an awful lot on who was president, and on the members of the senate, as it used to be called. What is it now?

Nathan: ASUC Senate?

Towle: Oh yes, it is the senate now. It used to be called something else.



The Three Old Men

Nathan: Was it Ex Committee?

Towle: Ex Committee, yes. Ex Com, of course. Executive Committee. But the students felt, as the years went by, and with reason, that they really weren't being given as much authority to run their own affairs as they would like. This I think was part of the ineffectualness of the ASUC during the FSM business. I don't like to say this, and I'm not mentioning any names because I think it would be unfair. The student body president that year couldn't have been a nicer young man but he was not terribly effective as a student body president for whatever the reason. This was unfortunate, but in fairness I'm not awfully sure that another person could have done anything, either.

Nathan: It's hard to say how much the situation and the structure would have hampered anyone.

Towle: That's right. That is why I'm very hesitant to comment. The Dean of Students, for years, was the Chancellor's representative on the ASUC; first on the Ex Com, and then on the senate. I went very regularly to the meetings until 1964-65, when I couldn't go because I was involved with so many of those night meetings concerned with FSM business. I asked Peter van Houten to finish out that year as the Chancellor's representative, with the Chancellor's approval, of course. Peter himself had been on one of the old Executive Committees as an undergraduate. He knew about the senate and was very much interested in the ASUC. He's an Associate Dean of Students. He's still at the University; a very loyal Californian. There were the three so-called "old men," as I always called them, who sat on the Executive Committee, each with a vote.

Nathan: Who were the "three old men?"

Towle: The Alumni representative, there was the Chancellor's



fowle: representative...now who was the third?

Nathan: Would there be a faculty representative?

Towle: Yes, that's right, a faculty representative; Professor Lyman Porter served a good part of the time that last year I was there. Everyone was free to vote as he chose. I always tried to make it a point to emphasize that I was there not as Dean of Students but as the Chancellor's representative. But it was pretty hard to disassociate the two, especially in the minds of the students. I attempted to speak for the Chancellor and to vote in accordance with what I felt his position was on a particular issue.

I wanted to represent the Chancellor in the best possible way, and I was not going to vote against his interests or the interests of the University if it seemed to me best not to do so. I think there was quite a feeling and had been for many years as to whether these three people (the "three old men") should have a vote. During 1962 to 1965, the feeling became more acute. I think they don't now. I'm not absolutely certain.

Nathan: I like to think of you as one of the old men.

Towle: I said something like this in a senate meeting. "You mean you don't want the three old men to have a vote?" I thought the kids would die laughing.  
[Laughter]

You see, the students didn't want sandbox government and I was sympathetic with this. They didn't always go about it in the most tactful way. But that's to be expected, they're young and impetuous and all that.



The Importance of the Disclaimer

Towle: One thing that I personally never could understand was why the ASUC members couldn't take stands and disassociate themselves from the University by disclaimer. This always bothered me.

Nathan: The faculty had that privilege, did they not?

Towle: I think they did. It seemed so to me--and this was no secret, in fact, I made no bones about expressing my opinion. I never really saw the logic of their not being allowed to state their positions. I saw nothing contrary to policy in a disclaimer. I realize that it can present difficulties and lead to misunderstanding, since the student signing it is known to be a member of the ASUC senate and the ASUC is part of the University. But so what? I never felt it was that important as far as the University was concerned. But it was important to the individual student at the time and failure to accept disclaimers only engendered more resentment against the "establishment."

Nathan: Right. At the time that you're describing could a member of the ASUC senate really not take part in partisan politics outside the campus?

Towle: Students could take part outside the campus, yes. But they couldn't as senate members take stands on these matters. The ASUC as a body or the students who sat on the ASUC senate as individuals couldn't.

I felt it would have been proper to have said, "We the members of ASUC senate, acting as individuals, and not as representatives of the University of California or the Associated Students of the University," or something of that sort; in other words, just giving them a disclaimer.

Nathan: Would this have applied to advocating the election of an individual?



Towle: Yes. But there were still those rules, those old advocacy rules, you see, that got in everybody's hair.

Nathan: If one had really wanted to go about seeing if the rules could be changed, what would the channel be?

Towle: Well, the channel was--don't think it wasn't used--the students would vote and would send the recommendations to the Chancellor, and the Chancellor if he wished to could act on them and then they would go to the President and the President would send them on to the Regents. It wasn't a terribly complicated thing. The students always felt they should petition the Regents directly; sometimes they did, but it usually got sent the other way around because there was an appropriate channel to follow. They never could see this. I used to try to explain to them, that they must follow channels. They'd say, "Why? It takes so much longer." "Well, this unfortunately is the way things seem to go in a large organization." Not a very satisfactory answer, I admit. It was hard to explain what appeared to be a cumbersome procedure. I can understand why they often felt that the administrative wheels were pretty slow moving.

Nathan: Would it have helped them if the Chancellor had strongly supported their views? Or would the Chancellor not feel that this is his position?

Towle: Oh yes, he could strongly support their views, yes, and sometimes he did. But by and large, the rules were strictly interpreted and adhered to.

The rules under which we were operating in 1964, for example, were rules approved by the Regents and appeared over President Kerr's name and were issued by his office. They were still called the Kerr Directives, much as Mr. Kerr hated to have them known as that.

Nathan: And these were the 1959 rules?



Fowle: No, they were revised in '61, I think, and again in '63. It would show in one of those "Rules Governing Student Organizations." We tried terribly hard in our office to administer the rules as fairly as we possibly could, and I believe we did. I think the students would agree on this. Where we bogged down in '64, of course, was the attempt to extend the application of the rules to that Bancroft-Telegraph area without sufficient warning or prior communication with the students. It was as simple as that. There were no new rules established at that time. But it was the extension of the rules that were then in existence to that twenty-six foot area which lighted the match.

One Interview and Only One

An accurate account of the background of the issuance of the September 14, 1964, memorandum is contained in the interview I had in March, 1965--which, as you will see, is quite a bit later--with Wallace Turner, San Francisco correspondent for the New York Times. It was published in the Sunday Times of March 14, 1965. I might add that Mr. Turner was the only correspondent of a major newspaper who ever bothered to interview me directly in all of those long, difficult months.

Nathan: Of a major newspaper or of any newspaper?

Fowle: I was saying major newspaper--any newspaper, let's put it. The San Francisco Chronicle never did interview me personally. It printed many articles in which I was quoted presumably verbatim. The sources of this information were not revealed but quotations were used freely. This complete lack of common courtesy and basic journalistic ethics were all the more galling when one realizes that the reporters in question only had to walk up two flights of stairs (or take the elevator) in Sproul



Fowle: Hall to obtain an interview. The University public information office supplied the Chronicle and Examiner reporters with office space on the ground floor of Sproul Hall from which to operate.

Regrettably such courtesy and lack of professional ethics were catching. The California Monthly in the February, 1965 issue--which was devoted to the FSM--made certain statements about "Dean Towle" which were assumption, not fact. And in its compendium of FSM events for the 1964 fall semester it attributes to me some of the same supposedly original quotations from the Chronicle. One thing which I will give the Monthly credit for is the excellent running account of the events of the FSM which is in the back part of that issue, and which will be useful to anyone interested in the day-by-day events. This still doesn't excuse it for quoting me either out of context or without checking with me. I have found it hard to forgive the California Monthly for such irresponsible reporting. I have always been cross with myself for not having actually sent a slightly snarky "Letter to the Editor," a copy of which I shall make a part of my papers for the Archives.

As for the Chronicle, I and many others came to expect only the most sensational and biased portrayal of events, irrespective of who in the administration might be involved in the report. My gratitude to Wallace Turner for finally getting at the truth and having the account of his interview appear in the prestigious New York Times helped to restore some of my sagging morale. On this happier note let's end this brief digression and get back to those eventful days in the fall of 1964.



Bellquist Committee Recommendations--1960

Towle: A while back I mentioned two other situations which had they been known, might have prevented the FSM uprising, or at least altered its course. One was a letter from Professor Eric Bellquist to Chancellor Seaborg, which got buried in the files somewhere, and which came to light, as far as I was concerned, in late spring, 1965. Dr. Bellquist had been appointed chairman of a special committee, the Special Committee on the Administration of the Regulations on Student Government, Student Organizations, and Use of University Facilities. This committee, I gather, had been appointed some time either in late 1959 or early 1960. The report itself, a copy of which I have here, could also go into this record--I see no reason why it shouldn't.

Nathan: I think it would be very good to include it.

Towle: It is dated July 28, 1960. The members of that committee, besides Professor E.C. Bellquist who was the chairman, were R.G. Bressler, Jr.; F.L. Kidner; F.C. Newman; and R.N. Walpole. Then, also participating in the committee's deliberations were Vice-Chancellor Sherriffs and Dean of Students William Sheppard. For some unknown reason neither Dr. Sherriffs nor Dr. Sheppard ever mentioned this committee or its recommendation to me when I became Dean of Students. Of course this had happened a year earlier. No one ever indicated that there had been such a committee, until much later in 1965, when Dr. Bellquist showed me his copy of the committee's recommendations. But I think it's one of the things that illustrates how easily the continuity in administration can be lost.

Three of the committee's recommendations are of special import. They are all interesting; there were five recommendations all together, but I think that three are particularly pertinent to this discussion.



Towle: For instance, here's one on political activity. This is recommendation number two, political activity. Shall I read this?

Nathan: Yes, please.

Towle: It says, "Paragraph IIIa on the regulations on the use of University facilities," (these were the regulations that were published and issued in the student handbook each semester) "restricts the soliciting of political party membership and the supporting or opposing of particular candidates to meetings where candidates or their representatives speak. We believe that restriction is unjustified. We see no reason why audiences limited to the campus community should be denied a full range of political discussion whether or not there are accompanying speeches by candidates for public office or their designated representatives." Then a footnote was put in after this: "In general, we believe that the campus community should have at least the privileges regarding University facilities that the Civic Center Act assures to citizens and others regarding public school facilities." This is the Education Code section dealing with that. It's section 16556, et cetera. That was their recommendation with respect to political activity, which at that time was restricted as far as speakers were concerned. It was during this time that the rules stipulated when you had a speaker on one side, you also had to present a speaker on the other side. They could have both sides presented, but there must be a balance between the two.

Nathan: At the same meeting?

Towle: Yes. And this committee apparently felt that this was not necessary, and said so.

Then this third committee recommendation concerned another of the things we were later to struggle with--"Fund raising, Paragraph IV A of the Regulation on Use of University Facilities also seems too restrictive. (This is quoting from the committee report.) We believe that fund-raising rules are required only to preclude exploitation of a captive audience and University personnel. Why



Towle: should political and other groups be denied the privilege of a collection?" Then the same footnote applies to this section as it did to Paragraph II about the Education Code.

Then the fourth one, Literature, "Paragraph IV D of the Regulation on use of University Facilities implies censorship of literature. Entirely apart from questions of free speech, we believe that the administrative burden is not justified and that the University's only legitimate concern relates to littering and other custodial matters." And here again is the reference to the general footnote concerning the Civic Center Act in the Education Code.

Now these are three of the crucial matters which came up, in varying degrees, in September of 1964.

Nathan: And this is dated 1960?

Towle: This is dated July 28, 1960. Now I want to know what happened in between. I've never been able to figure it out. This letter was brought to my attention in the spring of 1965 as I have indicated. This is a note for the files. I attached this at this time, apparently, after the period of worst crisis had passed. I'm inclined to believe that the original memorandum was filed and forgotten when Dr. Seaborg left. The Dean of Students office is not above criticism. Those who kept the files might have been a little more alert. As a member of the committee Dean Sheppard certainly was given a copy, which presumably would be in the office files.

Nathan: It was addressed, of course, to Seaborg.

Towle: Yes, he was the Chancellor then; and Dr. Sherriffs was Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Nathan: And it just went into the bottomless pit.

Towle: Then the rest of my little chit attached to this says, "Had I for instance known about it when I became Dean of Students in 1961 I certainly would



Towle: have attempted to have the University regulations rewritten to incorporate all the points that it brings up, or at the very least brought them to EWS's (that's Chancellor Strong's) attention. Actually, of course, Dr. Sherriffs, who sat with the committee should have advised Dr. Strong. He, too, was new but Dr. Sherriffs had already been there two or three years. We might have been saved much of our 1964-65 travail." I don't say that we would have been, but we might have been.

Nathan: Your choice of words is very eloquent.

Towle: Then the third situation which I alluded to--I said there were three situations. There were the Raskin article, and the memorandum that I've just been discussing about the strip.

#### Judge Cunningham's Opinion--1961

Nathan: Would the first be the deeding of the strip, second, the Bellquist committee recommendations?

Towle: Yes, you are correct. The third had to do with Judge Cunningham's opinion in 1961 regarding political advocacy on the campus. That date 1961 should be remembered. For reasons unknown to me the very important opinions he gave to the Chancellor's office at that time were not acted upon. Again the memorandum seems to have been stowed away in the Chancellor's office files without action of any kind. And yet it dealt with the same questions Dr. Sherriffs asked of Judge Cunningham in September 1964 after all of this fracas had started.

Nathan: Judge Cunningham alludes to an earlier memo?

Towle: When he replies to Dr. Sherriffs' memorandum in September, 1964, he alludes to his previous memorandum of 1961, in which he is answering



Towle: practically the same questions Dr. Sherriffs had again asked of him in September, 1964. The Judge alludes to this. His files are better kept.  
[Laughter]

Now these are things with which, if there had been some way that all could have been brought together in one place, we might have been able to forestall some of the difficulties we got ourselves into. At least, it's an interesting speculation.

Nathan: Interesting enough to make the hair on the back of your neck stand up.

Towle: The thing that is sad about all this, so many fine people were so badly hurt by the incidents of 1964-65. This is what I regret as much as anything, leaving out my own personal feelings about the matter--which were pretty devastating to me at the time. But it really was sad that it hurt so many people on the campus; people like Chancellor Strong, who had devoted their lives to the University, who cared tremendously about the University, and about the students and the faculty and everybody else. Then when you come across things like those buried memoranda, that so easily might have changed the course of events, you just wonder about it all.

After Judge Cunningham received Dr. Sherriff's September, 1964, memorandum, he requested that either Alex or I talk with him at his home on Sunday afternoon, September 24. My first memorandum was issued September 14 and the student groups most concerned sent representatives to see me on Thursday, September 17. Dr. Sherriffs asked me to see Judge Cunningham, as he planned to be in the country for the day.

Judge Cunningham said in our conversation that any regulation which denied political advocacy on campus was very suspect from a legal point of view. He did not tell me of his previous memorandum (1961) on the same subject. I've always regretted he didn't, but he probably thought Alex already had done so. I don't know that we touched upon the matter of collection of donations at that particular time. My notes don't show that. But you see, according to my



Towle: calculations, there were at least three times prior to the fall of 1964 when information bearing on this whole subject might have been available to people like myself, the Dean of Students. Had I, for instance, known about them before that fateful September, 1964, I think that we might have had a completely different story.

These buried memoranda could have easily changed the course of events. They certainly could have changed the rules. My question is: what happened? Why did the persons who got these letters and the replies not mention them? Why was nothing done with them? This is what I don't understand. They were evidently just stuck in the files.

Nathan: Then Sherriffs went back and apparently asked the same questions of Judge Cunningham.

Towle: He did, indeed.

Nathan: And Cunningham is reported to have asked for more time to prepare his reply and Sherriffs said.. .

Towle: We can't wait.

Nathan: But he had already had an answer.

Towle: Already, back in 1961! The proof is in these--I've got them now when they don't do me any good, right there in my own files. They answer a lot of things that were puzzling everybody and which were not accepted at first by the Berkeley administration in September, 1964.

All of this goes under the heading of what might have been. It ought to be known for two reasons. Not only because it doesn't make us all look quite as stupid as we appeared to be, but it's good for people looking through this in the future to know that the University wasn't entirely blind to some of these problems and that there had been a good deal of thought put on the matter of these rules and regulations and they actually do reflect certain--ch, what'll I say?

Nathan: Rather liberal standards in many ways?



Towle: Yes. For some reason they were not acted on at the time that the recommendations were made, which is disturbing enough. But the complete breakdown in intra-office communication is rather appalling.

Nathan: Right. And the recommendations are really so clear.

Towle: Yes, they are clear. As a matter of fact, nothing could be clearer.

Nathan: A bit earlier, I was wondering about chancellors' tenure. I was just checking the dates. The Chancellors at Berkeley were: Clark Kerr, '52 to '58; Glenn Seaborg '58 to '61; Edward Strong, '61 to '65; Martin Meyerson, '65; and Roger Heyns from '65 on. Seaborg never was Vice-Chancellor.

Towle: He was the Chancellor of the Berkeley campus. He came in when Mr. Kerr was appointed President. Dr. Seaborg was Chancellor of the Berkeley campus.

Nathan: So that '58 to '61 is when a lot of these things happened, as you said. Materials somehow did not get transferred in anyone's memory, anyway, after '61.

Towle: No. And since these various things came to light, I've been puzzled as to why the Dean of Students office, for instance, didn't have copies of these memoranda readily available. I remember Bill Sheppard and I, before he left as Dean of Students, talked about varicus things but most of them were current matters. There were several things hanging fire when he left that I would have to take care of as his successor as Dean of Students. But apparently neither of us thought about matters of past policies and I wasn't smart enough or knowledgeable enough to ask. I don't know.

Nathan: But this was not part of the bundle that was handed to you.

Towle: No, no. It's just as though literally a new broom sweeps clean. It's not good.

Nathan: Yes. You've got a dust-free campus but not an efficient one. [Laughter]



Towle: Well, of course, I think our administrative inefficiencies showed up early in September 1964 after the issuance of the first memorandum to the students about the extension of the rules to the Bancroft-Telegraph strip, because one of the things that was really bad and put the administration, and quite properly so, in a very poor light was the fact that we were changing our minds every fifteen minutes. You know, I'd write a memorandum one day and then the next day I'd write one saying in effect, "We changed our minds. We're going to do this instead." Well, this doesn't give confidence.

Nathan: That's an interesting point, that perhaps there is a difference between mind changing and negotiating, in which you yield a point or carry a point.

Towle: Personally, I never mind changing my mind and saying I've changed my mind, especially if I think I have made a mistake. But I know that it's not always easy for an institution to do this.

Nathan: Well, perhaps, an individual says, "I have changed my mind because..." either "you have convinced me," or "I have new evidence." But one doesn't just say, "All right, I've changed my mind."

Towle: Yes, that's right. And then there's the matter of face-saving, too.

Nathan: And through the whole episode, the feelings and the interpretations were just as important as the facts.

Towle: They were indeed, sometimes even more so.

Nathan: Yes, the facts were sometimes pretty elusive, but people knew how they felt.



Possibility of Losing in the Courts

Nathan: I think it is interesting to see the legal issue presented by Sherriffs' memorandum to Cunningham of September 18, 1964. According to Hierich, when Cunningham wanted more time to study on September 18, Sherriffs rejoined 1) it couldn't be put off, 2) "I did not want to desert a position because we might lose in the courts," with an implication that he must have understood the possibility of losing in the courts, which means the freedom of speech and assembly question was not resolved.

Towle: Yes, I was especially interested in Max Hierich's comments on that, too. Because wasn't this the basis of his own personal interview with Dr. Sherriffs?

Nathan: Yes, it was. He had some documents, some notes, some memoranda.

Towle: I was aware of the legal issue because it had been pointed out to me so clearly by Judge Cunningham. He said, in effect, "I think you are on very uncertain grounds if this point is not cleared." And then he added this, "You should tell the Chancellor this, but you must remember that I am not the legal adviser to the Chancellor, I am the Counsel for the Regents." He made this very clear. It didn't make any difference to me as far as the legal point of what we were discussing was concerned. But you see when I went back later that Sunday afternoon to Chancellor Strong and told him the gist of my conversation with Mr. Cunningham, he didn't seem to be particularly impressed with this point of view. He already had before him the memorandum which was to be issued the next day. The next morning we were to have a meeting in his office at eight thirty, because I had to see the students at ten o'clock to give them an answer to their petition. You remember that petition?

Nathan: I remember that.



Towle: That Monday morning, I pled as staunchly as I could, on the basis of my conversation with Mr. Cunningham the day before, that we liberalize the interpretation of that part of the memorandum about advocacy.

I was sitting in the Chancellor's office, so I know that this is an actual fact. Mr. Strong took the telephone and called Mr. Kerr, I think at his home, but that doesn't matter. Now I did not hear word for word what Mr. Kerr said to Mr. Strong. But obviously, Mr. Kerr said to leave it as it was because when Mr. Strong hung up the telephone he said, "The President goes along with the memorandum as it is written now." And that was that.

I felt very bad about it because I knew then that we really were going to be in an untenable position. I hated to go back to the students at ten o'clock when I was so completely unconvinced myself that this was the right thing to do. I can administer anything that I think is right or reasonable, but it's hard when you don't think something is reasonable.

You see, another thing that disturbed me, as much as I liked Dr. Pope--he and I have always been good friends...

Nathan: Was this Saxton Pope?

Towle: Yes. Dr. Saxton Pope. He was sent along with me, apparently to give more weight to my meeting, as the representative of Dr. Sherriffs' office. I didn't need anybody and I would have much rather met those students by myself. I think we--they and I--would have had a chance; they didn't know Dr. Pope at all. When they came and I told them right away what the situation was, I hoped they wouldn't be antagonistic, exactly, but I knew they would be disappointed, and that they certainly were not going to let it rest there. As I say, it's the one time I didn't want Dr. Pope, or anyone else, around. Talking with the students was my job, and I said so. But I was told it would be much better



Towle: if I had an official representative from the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs office there. Of course, I didn't agree. If the Dean of Students couldn't talk with the students in my own office-- I might just as well hang up my hat.

Nathan: Yes, what a very undermining thing for your own position.

Towle: Now, I think I know why this was being done. It presumably was to help me because they knew this was going to be difficult, and it was thought that if I had someone else from the administration who had also been given this bit of information directly from the top office, as it were, it probably would have more weight. But it didn't, and I knew it wouldn't. I was very sorry it happened that way. It wouldn't have changed the outcome at that time but there would have been less feeling on the part of the students that we were putting pressure on them. The students, I know, felt we were trying to pressure them into accepting this, and I just didn't like it.

#### Changing the Ban on Advocacy

Nathan: So, by the time you had carried your point it was a week later.

Towle: It was. Then, about four days later than that at the first University meeting on September 28, Chancellor Strong came out and said, in effect, "You may have advocacy on the campus."

Nathan: There was so much agitation, half of the demonstrators didn't hear it.

Towle: Well, they couldn't have heard it. If I hadn't known what the Chancellor was going to say because I had seen, just prior to going down into the lower



Towle: plaza there, a copy of his speech, I probably wouldn't have heard it either because there was too much confusion and noise. The students were not supposed to be picketing in the meeting itself, but they did.

Nathan: Yes, I remember the walking around in long rows.

There is a quote from Jackie Goldberg in Hierich's manuscript in which she says, "The students were first elated and astonished when they managed to hear what was happening, but then they told each other that the administration was just going to pick them off later."

Towle: Yes, I don't know what she meant by that. I was most surprised when I read it.

Nathan: Do you think she meant, to take them off their guard so they would no longer be unified?

Towle: This was the implication, yes.

Nathan: Did you and your other senior staff people have an inkling that this kind of thinking was current?

Towle: No, and I don't know, really, what was behind this. I had not known that she had made this statement until I read it in Hierich's dissertation. He interviewed her on a tape recording and she apparently made that statement to him, among her other statements, but as far as I know, and I'm sure I would remember anything like this, as important as this-- Jackie made no such statement to me. And I don't think she would, really, because in the first place if there was that feeling about the administration, Jackie, as one of their spokesmen wasn't about to tell the administration, even though Jackie and I personally were on perfectly agreeable terms.

Nathan: Actually--maybe there could not have been--but there was no administration person who was able at that point to debate with them and say, "Let's discuss this."

Towle: There should have been, of course. This is the thing that has always worried me and does concern



Towle: me to this day. I would have been glad to have gone out and talked to the students--not from the top of that car, but from Sproul Hall steps or anywhere else. I suggested that at one point and was told that I must not. I'm not sure of the reasons--I don't know whether they feared for my personal safety, I can't believe that. That, of course, would have been absurd. The only other thing I can think of, was that by then things had become so polarized there was absolutely no giving in on this point of view--"We will not negotiate, we will not do anything while they are breaking rules."

Nathan: That's interesting. Of course, negotiating is one thing and debate and discussion is quite possibly different.

Towle: I know, too, that Arleigh would have liked to have talked with them as a group when disciplinary matters came up. Of course, we do have to remember that at that time they were at fever pitch and I don't know that it would have done any good. Probably we would have been booted off the place. This was the sad thing about it; everybody became so unreasonable. Including ourselves, I guess.

### The Cancelled Meetings

Nathan: It was hard to know where to get hold of the situation.

Towle: Yes. I think we made one real mistake--that's a large statement--I think among many mistakes we made at least one very serious one quite early in the debacle. That was not having that meeting with the group that afternoon when we had called a meeting of the student groups and their faculty advisers that I have mentioned earlier.



Towle: Arleigh also had an interview with Hierich. I have always been very careful not to try to put words into other peoples' mouths, because I think this is bad business. Have enough trouble with my own. So I can only surmise about Alex and Arleigh.

Nathan: Apparently Williams was willing enough to meet with the cited students.

Towle: Oh, certainly, he was willing. In fact, Arleigh had asked the four--I think it was, was it four or eight students who had violated the rules?

Nathan: I believe there were eight.

Towle: He had asked them to come to see him, he had sent letters asking them to come to see him. This was in accordance with our usual way of handling disciplinary cases. Nobody knew, and Arleigh didn't know himself; he might not have done anything, except just talk with them, but warning them about breaking rules and all. But they refused to come unless all came. This is when the 300 came charging in and said "We're all equally to blame."

Nathan: The documents indicate that Sherriffs had said to Williams, "Don't take them in one at a time. Just say that you won't see anybody." Apparently Sherriffs was advising Arleigh Williams.

Towle: Yes. I believe he was. In the early afternoon, Arleigh came to me and said that under the circumstances, and he evidently had talked with Alex Sherriffs, and also I think with some of the faculty advisers (I'm not sure of this but it seems to me that they had called Arleigh), it was decided we would cancel that meeting because the students had packed into Sproul Hall by then and it just didn't seem conducive of anything constructive.

Nathan: So, am I right in thinking that there were really two meetings: one that turned into a crowd scene, of the eight cited students and the 300 students. And the other one was your meeting with the student groups signing the petition.



Towle: That would have been my group meeting, yes, in my office in the morning. We were planning to have the other meeting at four o'clock that afternoon. But you see at three o'clock when the eight students were supposed to come to see Arleigh, they refused to come unless he would see all 300 of them individually.

Nathan: And at four you had a meeting scheduled.

Towle: We both intended to be at the meeting--Arleigh had scheduled it for both of us. We were working on things together and he said, "I'll schedule it." Then the advisers were called up by one of the administrative assistants in the office and requested to be there if they possibly could.

We were going to have it in what was known as the old Regents' Room in Sproul Hall. That's the big room that used to be the Regents' room before University Hall was built. To be sure, we had to make a decision. It was a value judgment at the moment and it may have been the wrong one, not to meet.

Nathan: Your four o'clock meeting was to have been a meeting of student groups and their faculty advisers?

Towle: Yes. But you see so many of the students who were involved in this disciplinary thing were also students who presumably were going to come to that four o'clock meeting. And the 300--it was a pretty tense situation out there in Sproul Hall at that particular time, and it did not seem, as we tried to judge the situation, that this would be the best time to see them. But as I look back (you know, hindsight is better than foresight) I wish we had tried it no matter what happened.

Nathan: It's understandable that one would feel, "We're not going to make progress."

Towle: Yes, but we might have. And I know that later on when I was talking with Jackie Goldberg she brought this up and she said, "I wish that you had had that meeting, it might have made a difference." Now she



Fowle: didn't know that it would, but she said the same thing; and I know now that I wish that we had, too. But we were--to be very honest, we were so overcome by what had suddenly happened, just out of the blue in a way, that I think we were practically bowled over. All of this was so foreign to anything that we had ever even contemplated or experienced.

Nathan: There was a gruesome feeling about the whole thing.

#### The Continuing Work of the Office

Fowle: Yes. Then, you see, after that things went from bad to worse, really, in the sense of our relationship as an office. Not individually. The interesting thing about it is that we were seeing individual students in our office just the same.

Nathan: You were!

Fowle: Oh, yes. Students were coming in about other things--loans, petitions, and the many other facets of student life we dealt with.

Nathan: And the business of the office went on anyway?

Fowle: Oh, the business of the office was going on, yes. Certainly. We were involved in student matters as usual--or doing things as best we could. Of course, I personally had to cancel many appointments because I was then becoming involved in all sorts of meetings in the Chancellor's office with various and sundry people. The Chancellor was trying to work out something that was at least acceptable to everybody. Arleigh was handling the disciplinary matters. But the daily business of the office had to go on just the same. We didn't come to a standstill. I turned over certain things I remember, that Arleigh would ordinarily have done, to Betty Neely for the time being. But we functioned as a normal office as best we could.



Nathan: You must have had loyal people.

Towle: Absolutely; they were wonderful. They couldn't have been more loyal or more helpful--and they were just as disturbed as anyone possibly could be about the turn of events. The young men, the deans, like Peter Van Houten and George Murphy and Louis Rice would go out to the tables and try to reason with the students about rule violations, or at least see if they couldn't get them to listen to reason. They were really stalwart in the face of complete student rejection. But it was an awfully trying time for the office. If they all hadn't been such a loyal and devoted group--devoted to the University and devoted to their work, to what they were doing with students, the morale--the bottom would have dropped right out. But it didn't. It was affected, of course, it couldn't help but be, but not damaged permanently.

Nathan: That really is remarkable, that you still pursued your responsibilities.

Towle: Oh, yes. We were, except those two times when the office had to be closed because the campus police said, "You cannot keep these offices open." This was a protection, I suppose, to everybody and to the property, though by that time Sproul Hall, at least the hallway outside our office, looked pretty battle-scarred.

#### Giving Orders First and Explaining Later

At this point, I want it to be made very clear because this is important to me and to those with whom I was associated at that time, that none of the remarks or the statements I have made or the accounts that I'm giving of this affair as I see them, in any sense are to be taken as trying to build up a case for myself. Let those who read this record, make their own judgments and conclusions.



Towle: I think it is important, however, to get some of these things on the record. We were all equally guilty of many bad administrative procedures, and not only procedures, but judgments as well. The administration showed up very badly in those two weeks, or at least the first week, anyway, when the various memoranda were being issued, instructions were being issued to the students, because they were issued from weakness and not from strength. We had not clearly thought out all the implications of each of these memoranda.

It was the same feeling I had about our putting out the original memorandum. We did it too hastily; there was no need to. I didn't take exception particularly to extending the then existing rules to the whole campus, more specifically that twenty-six foot strip. I think it was absurd in a way to have gone along as long as we did without having that Bancroft-Telegraph strip put under University regulations. Probably this is where the Dean of Students office--my predecessors as well as I--were at fault.

On the other hand, I am certain that we could have worked this thing out with the students some way, certainly on a temporary basis, until we were sure of what our permanent position ought to be. I think we could have worked it out with the students in those early weeks if we had not been so eager to write everything down. This I will give myself credit for. I tried to put off that first memorandum because I did not think we were going about it the right way.

The reason I didn't: it was completely foreign to any way that I have ever dealt with students. Never in all the years I have worked with students, have I issued a command, as it were, without first letting them have a chance to know what it was all about. This is a principle of good personnel policy, really. You just don't go around giving orders and then explaining later.

Now, I don't say that the outcome would have been different. I don't know, of course, but I think it could have been. I don't think all of their



Towle: complaints were justified. But with some justification, certainly, the thing that they complained about from the start was that there was no communication. Well, there was communication, yes, but there was no real--I think that's when the word "dialogue" began to be used so much.

Nathan: Yes, one of the worst things that come out of it.  
[Laughter]

Towle: You never after that discussed anything with anybody. You always had a dialogue. Well, we didn't have any dialogue on this, to get into the spirit of the times. And I think we should have had a dialogue and I think we could have established one. It would have been hard going and there might not have been a meeting of the minds but at least there would have been a chance for a give and take before the memorandum was issued and took them by surprise. Furthermore, as I commented at the time, I looked at the Bancroft-Telegraph area a little differently than I think Dr. Sherriffs did. I was somewhat concerned about the traffic situation but not excessively so, and as I remarked earlier, I had talked with some of the leaders of the student groups about this, chiefly, I must admit, because of Dr. Sherriffs' apparent concern. But I did not pursue the matter.

Then, you see, the whole thing was brought to a head by the bicycling bit. Bicycles were permitted on the campus only in certain areas because of danger to people. There were signs printed by the superintendent's office on the brick, in yellow. I didn't know whether you recall the signs that said, "No bicycling."

Nathan: Yes.

Towle: Well, bicyclists got to the point where they paid absolutely no attention to the signs. I remember one man with a small daughter had complained because he said she was almost run down, knocked over, and he felt this was a very dangerous kind of situation for the University to permit.



Nathan: I did see people in collisions.

Fowle: That's right. Because the campus was getting more and more crowded, with students and others. What prompted the first meeting of a committee to discuss this whole plaza area was the matter of bicycling. Then it was decided that bicycles should be licensed. All the owners had to do was walk down-stairs in Sproul Hall to the police department and obtain a license, but it was hoped that this might deter those who were using the campus as a racetrack. That is how this committee got together to discuss the pedestrian traffic pattern on the campus. Dr. Sherriffs called the meeting and was its chairman.

It was brought about by these bicycle incidents. It was decided and I think with reason, that something should be done about the traffic to alleviate pedestrian traffic hazards. Because the area in question was the main entrance to the campus and because the Student Union was right there, and there were cross-traffic patterns all through the area, the "bicycle" committee thought we should try to do something about "cleaning up the area."

Part of the discussion was on the matter of the great number of tables, chairs, and placards centered in that area as you entered the campus. Admittedly it was colorful, but it was getting to be more of a traffic problem than we had ever anticipated or than it had ever been before. The student groups using the area had those enormous posters, or they'd have a table and then a poster and a chair, and then have a cluster of people around them and their donation cans. Every organization had the same privileges presumably; but there were getting to be more and more organizations all the time. They were in the Group One organizations, so-called.

Nathan: What is that?



Recruiting for Political Candidates

Towle: I'd have to look this up because I've kind of forgotten it myself. In general, they were the so-called "non-recognized" groups, most of them politically oriented. By registering with the Dean of Students office and providing us with a list of their officers, they were permitted to use University facilities for some of their events. You know it's funny how in two years I can forget all the little details but in that student handbook that our office published each fall, complete information can be found. The last one was a yellow-covered one, or a kind of a mustard-colored one, for 1964-65. A copy was included, I am sure, in the material I turned over to the Archives.

I was on vacation the month of July (1964) when the recruiting for political candidates was going on in the Bancroft-Telegraph area. This was the thing that apparently bothered Dr. Sherriffs the most. He had been alerted to the situation by an Oakland Tribune reporter, as I recall it. Being on vacation during much of the politicking, I was not aware of much of it. Even if I had been on campus during July, I doubt that it would have bothered me particularly. As I said earlier, I had inherited the strip and never thought much about its use.

I had so many other things to think about. I wasn't concerned about whether the rules and regulations existed out there on the twenty-six foot strip. I wasn't sure even how far the strip extended at that time. But I knew that that was University property, at least down to the city line, which was about ten feet in from the street.

Nathan: This is curious. There is also a note from Hierich. He quotes Sherriffs as saying that he was exasperated with the excessive permissiveness.

Towle: Yes.



Nathan: Why should he have been exasperated?

Towle: I know Dr. Sherriffs felt that I and my office were being remiss in not doing something about "cleaning up the mess." [Laughter] This I know because he told me in so many words, in a kindly way; but there was no question about how he felt about it.

I'm afraid I didn't take it in the sense that I thought it was the most urgent thing we had to do. But there were apparently political implications here which to this day, frankly, I don't quite understand. I just don't know why we had to get into such a swivet about political implications of the Scranton-Goldwater recruiting out in front.

Nathan: Perhaps there are people who never have accepted the idea that there can be this overt political activity on campus although it's been going on.

Towle: It's been going on for a long time. Chancellor Strong had been consulted about the September 14 memorandum by Dr. Sherriffs, who was eager to have it promulgated. I know President Kerr was not involved in the original decision, he wasn't even here. He didn't get back from Japan--I think it was or the Far East--until either the next day or the day after the first memorandum went to the student organizations. He was here certainly on September 18 because we had a meeting with him that day, I know, at University House. I mentioned that before possibly. I think Hierich mentioned it, and I told him about it. But there's no question that there were several people involved in the original memorandum. As I have indicated earlier, I think we did handle many of the situations badly.

ADDENDUM--July 1972

In retrospect, I think it would be well for me to be a little more precise about the sequence of events described above. On Wednesday, September 16, 1964, the day after his return from the Orient, President Kerr called together the persons most concerned with the memorandum of September 14 in order to inform himself fully about the circumstances. Those present were Chancellor Strong, Dr. Sherriffs, and myself. Mr. Hafner was also there for part of the time. We met in what used to be President Sproul's study in the President's House. This was an informal meeting and unlike the meeting of September 18, no official minutes were kept.



The Quality of Student Behavior

Towle: On the other hand, I think the students behaved very badly, too, in many ways. And I want to make this very clear. There was no excuse, for example, for the way that they behaved at the beginning. It was as though they were just waiting for an opportunity to create a crisis. They really had no reason to think that the Berkeley administration was going to deny them fair hearings, or anything else of that kind. I have always felt that they were completely illogical in some of their statements, for example, that they couldn't be heard. Many of them were heard.

Although I am sympathetic to many of their feelings about the restrictiveness of some of the rules--I myself had questioned some of them because my office found them difficult to interpret and administer.

Possibly we should have pushed much more than we did for the revision of some of these rules and regulations. But they were state-wide regulations issued over the President's name. But to go back, I think there was no excuse for some of that early student behavior. They did defy all reason. Then, of course, as so often happens when you have a large number of people and a situation just made for a riot, or vigorous protest or whatever one chooses to call it, everything conspired to bring about confrontation. Newspapers liked to call it the "Berkeley riot." I think some of the faculty also behaved very badly. The rules should have been changed, and they were changed, rather soon, of course. But no one gave any of the Berkeley administration any credit for working so diligently behind the scenes to bring about change.

Nathan: They were changed, that's right, and then the demands changed.

Towle: Yes, then the demands changed. Then, as far as I can see, what was termed a "Free Speech Movement"



Towle: was no more a free speech movement, if it really ever was. That term just became an umbrella under which you could put every other demand.

Nathan: Well, it became a slogan and a slogan isn't necessarily descriptive.

Towle: No, no. That's right. And, of course, the local press just loved all of this and gave us the very bad and, I feel, unfair coverage which I mentioned earlier.

Nathan: Was there anybody who was supposed to be the administration spokesman?

Towle: As you know, Richard Hafner was the public information officer at that time.

Nathan: He's a transmitter, not an originator of information, isn't he?

Towle: Yes. I, for instance, wouldn't have made statements to the press about what the Chancellor's office was going to do or what I thought the Chancellor's office should do because I didn't feel that it was my place to do so.

Nathan: No, but you could have spoken about what you were going to do.

Towle: Yes, I could have done that, and would have welcomed an opportunity with an unbiased press. I was so upset about all the unfair and biased statements in the newspapers and elsewhere that I thought at one time actually of resigning--not resigning, but retiring early at the end of that current semester, it would have been February, 1965. In fact, I had a letter all written out, a draft of one to Chancellor Strong saying that I was requesting early retirement. He knew, of course, that I was going to retire in June of 1965, anyway. That was common knowledge. Also, the Regents knew I was retiring then because I had made a statement before them to that effect. I could have requested early retirement, and would have been given it I feel quite sure. I thought of doing so not in terms



Towle: of what might be good for me or better for me. I didn't care about being blamed for a whole lot of things which often I was not in sympathy with, but on the other hand I felt that it might be one way of clearing the air. I did discuss it very briefly with Alex Sherriffs one day. And he said, "Oh, but you can't do that."

Well, of course, I could have done it. Then I began to think, "This is sort of running away from something. Sure, the heat's on me, but I've never run from anything in my long life and I don't intend to do it now." Furthermore, I looked upon my connection with the Chancellor and the Chancellor's office and the various people with whom I was associated throughout this episode on the campus--that included a whole lot of faculty, too--we were in a sense a team. I felt certainly that I was part of the Chancellor's "team." Now that may be old-fashioned or old hat, or whatever you want to call it but I somehow felt that I couldn't take an easy way out. I was loyal to the Chancellor because I thought he was being given a terribly difficult role--or at least he was in a very difficult role, trying so hard to bring some sense of common commitment to the campus. You know, his whole background had been that of a liberal.

Nathan: In the loyalty oath controversy he was very staunch.

Towle: Yes! I just could not understand how he could be so trapped in this thing, but he was.

Nathan: Concerning this business of the lack of carry-over. Some said that if the students knew Strong's background in the loyalty oath controversy and the way Kerr had fought for bringing controversial political figures onto the campus, how could the students possibly accuse these men of being restrictive? The fact is that most of the students didn't know.

Towle: I don't think they did, really, and at that point they didn't care, at least most of them didn't.



Nathan: So you determined then, that, like it or not, you would remain?

Towle: Yes. Then I decided I would remain. I'd see this thing through until the end of the academic year when I was going to leave anyway because of retirement.

Nathan: Is this an age factor or did you determine when you would retire?

Towle: No, I was sixty-seven in April of 1965, and sixty-seven is the mandatory retirement for administrative people. There was no secret about this. Of course, the students didn't know it, why should they? Couldn't have been less interested, except they probably would have thought I was older than I was if they'd known I was anywhere near sixty-seven at that point. [Laughter] Don't trust anybody over thirty, you know.

Nathan: Yes, you more than doubled it.

Towle: Doubled, oh, boy.

But, anyhow, you see, I had reminded Chancellor Strong of the fact that I would be retiring at the end of '65--oh, I guess it was late in '63 because I wanted to give him and the President an opportunity to have plenty of time to look around for a successor and to consider whom they wanted to have as Dean of Students, and also so that there would be an easy transition for the next person. I had thought that my successor would be named maybe six months or even longer before I left. Then I would have an opportunity, not to break him in, but to give him some ideas of some of the situations on the campus.

Nathan: Had you assumed that it would be a man rather than a woman?

Towle: I assumed it would be.

Nathan: Is Arleigh Williams now Dean of Students?

Towle: Yes. He was Dean of Men then. But there was no promise, there never is--there is never any



Towle: indication who's going to be your successor. I was very happy to have Arleigh selected, but no one thinks in terms that somebody else in the office is necessarily going to be put up, because this doesn't always happen.

You see, Bill Sheppard left rather suddenly in the spring of 1961. Well, I was Dean of Women then. Chancellor Strong, of course, with concurrence of the President and Vice-Chancellor Sherriffs, called me over to his office one day and just said he would like very much to have me serve. I recall saying, "Well, look, in the first place, I'm not going to be here very long, only four more years. In the second place, I've never even given a thought to being Dean of Students."

He said, "I don't think there's any question about your being able to do the work." Well I thought it was quite exciting, really, and also very flattering.

Nathan: Yes, of course, and this again, I'm sure would give you some little extra feeling of loyalty.

Towle: That's it; I always felt that way. Chancellor Strong was wonderful to me. And so was President Kerr. Everyone at the University has always treated me wonderfully well over many years beginning with President Sproul. That's why I'm so devoted to the University, I suppose.

Nathan: Your devotion was put to a test.

Towle: I think it was, too. [Laughter] But that part's all right. I mean, I didn't mind having had it put to the test. I was just sorry that I seemed unable to do more at a very critical time.



The Policy of No Negotiation

Nathan: Was the structure somehow not established so that you could?

Towle: Well, you see, the policy about how we were to handle the protests was settled rather early in September. This was the thing that was disturbing, the policy was settled: "We will not negotiate while they are violating rules and regulations."

Nathan: Now, how was this policy achieved?

Towle: This policy, I think, was first enunciated pretty clearly the night--it was that Friday night, and September 18--when we met President Kerr over at University House after a reception which had been held for independent newspaper editors throughout the state. That was pretty much the determination of the policy, right then and there, as I recall.

Nathan: So, actually, President Kerr really laid it on the line in saying, "We will not."

Towle: Yes. Doesn't Hierich bring this out, too? I think he does.

Nathan: I think he mentions it.

Towle: This is where the policy was more or less enunciated. We didn't question it particularly, at least at that point, especially as students were violating rules like mad. This was the thing. If the students themselves at this point could or would only have taken a long look at some of their behavior, I mean mostly their group behavior, they might have been able to understand a little bit more why the administration was so frustrated.

I really find it incredible that more than two years later, there is still so much unrest and acrimony.

Nathan: Because it was not resolved?



Towle: Not that so much, but that there's still all this uproar, even in 1967. I am not sure it's the college generation particularly, because I think an awful lot of people are using the campus as a platform. I don't object to their speaking out on anything they want, heaven knows, but I think to disrupt the campus, the everyday activities of the campus, to the extent that some of them seem to be doing: this does disturb me. The administrative officers--the Dean of Students, the Chancellor--shouldn't have to be involved so much with a few students who are violating rules and regulations because it takes away their effectiveness from a total program which is set up for the benefit of all students.

I happened to be on the campus yesterday morning, or I was near the campus, so I went over to the Golden Bear and had a cup of coffee and met some of my old friends, as a matter of fact.

Nathan: You can hardly avoid that, can you?

Towle: [Laughter] No. And they said to me. "Oh, oh."

I said, "I know. This is just about where I came in, isn't it? Or left."

And they said, "Isn't it just amazing that all this ferment is still going on?"

But this isn't what I started to say. I picked up a Daily Californian and I was very much interested in Chancellor Heyns' statement yesterday, his speech to the Academic Senate. I think that it is extremely well put. The business of the main purpose of the University being to provide a climate--the best possible climate--for educational pursuits--to have this interrupted all the time by this ferment. So much of it is just not logical, really, and so much of it is unnecessary. A few dissidents, really, bringing so much destruction and confusion.

Nathan: Following this line of thought, some said that during the course of events the steering committee for what was then the FSM, consistently ousted the more moderate people and changed the direction of



Nathan: the movement.

Towle: Oh, yes. This was quite apparent. You see, there has never been any question in my mind that when this all started in September of 1964, the large majority of students were not involved. Those that were included maybe 1,500 to 3,000 students really dedicated to the FSM, but most of the campus was not involved except on the periphery.

Nathan: Coming down to watch.

Towle: Yes, that's right. The "watchers" weren't involved particularly, but they were touched by it, of course; they couldn't help but be. But I'm speaking about those students who would be what we call the ones who were the most active in the group.

I'm basing my figures more or less on the events. For instance, the 776 who were arrested represented a generous part of the students, I'm sure, who were involved actively in the FSM, but they didn't represent all, by any means. As it started out--and I've never questioned this--they had real conviction; it was a crusade: they felt it was a crusade for student rights, for students to be heard. And the things that they wanted they felt sufficiently keenly about to endanger their own academic progress at that particular time. But you see, it degenerated before too many weeks into a power struggle and this was what was bad.

#### Civil Disobedience, Mississippi and Berkeley

One thing that is important--and I have forgotten whether or not I've said this before--I did not relate the events that had happened in Mississippi, which so many of our students had taken part in--the civil rights-voter registration movements in the summer--to their actions on the



Towle: campus until after this thing started. It never occurred to me that they would translate their idea about civil disobedience to the campus or feel that it was justified here. But, you see, they did. I really didn't understand, at that point, their feeling about this. If I had been smarter and more on my toes, I might have.

Nathan: But then when you no longer can get together and talk at all, how are you going to pick up these deep feelings?

Towle: Exactly. I was sympathetic with these students who had gone in the summer to work in Mississippi, because they were dedicated individuals, no question about it. They were ready to lay their lives on the line if necessary and you couldn't help but have real respect and admiration for those who felt and acted according to deep conviction. All over, not just Berkeley, but students from everywhere.

I just did not connect it when this FSM business broke out in the fall, I did not connect this with their civil rights activities. You see, what they apparently thought--from what I gather reading and Max Hierich's interviews with the students bring this out, which I found exceedingly interesting--they thought the administration was trying in some way to lessen the effect of their civil rights activities and make their FSM activities ineffectual by isolating them one by one from the group. As far as I was concerned, this was the farthest thing from my mind. It just didn't occur to me.

Nathan: No, and I think the same point was implied in Strong and Kerr's background: of all the people in California, these would be the last to take this position.

Towle: Right. It was so extraordinary that this should have happened. This, to me, is the real crux of this so-called lack of communication, that we didn't really--any of us, I think--see this.

Nathan: Because it isn't logical.



Towle: No, it isn't logical.

Nathan: There hasn't been repression on this campus.

Towle: No, not at all. This was the thing.

Nathan: It's like acting out a fantasy in which the administration are the monsters and you must do anything you can to protect yourself in a magic way against these monsters. Who's going to recognize himself as a monster?

Towle: I don't think it was our role. [Laughter] I'm sure a lot of students thought I was, or that some of us were. I don't know if the students would have acted differently if they had known that none of us had that feeling, really. As I say, I didn't even know what they were talking about.

Nathan: Do you think you would have been believed about your views?

Towle: I doubt it, in the heat and fever of the thing. But had I been able to foresee how all of the civil rights activities were to be translated into situations on the campus, if I had been able to see those two things, the whole picture would have been clearer. I don't know whether I was just not--I wasn't with it, certainly, as far as that was concerned.

Nathan: You have lots of company.

Towle: [Laughter] Yes. But it would have helped if I had been more aware about the situation. Possibly, then, I could have alerted others.

Nathan: Is there any possibility of operating in a different way?

Towle: I don't know. Hopefully, this taught people in my own office, the Dean of Students office, and in the Chancellor's office, in fact, every concerned person on campus, including the faculty, a great many things about intercommunication and about taking every step possible to alleviate a feeling of



Towle: alienation and impersonality. I think there has been real effort on the part of the faculty since 1964, because they got a terrible jolt. I know there's been real effort on the part of the administration. I've been interested in how many times Chancellor Heyns himself has appeared before the students and has given them the opportunity to question him. There always was accessibility, but I think there's more of a concentrated effort now to have doors open and to be accessible. Of course, the Dean of Students office was always accessible, but you see, we weren't on the highest level. This makes a difference. If you're not on the highest level, you can't speak with the highest authority.

Particle and Spider

Nathan: Now may I ask a couple of things? If they don't interest you, we don't have to pursue them.

One, the warning that went to Particle, Berkeley, the student scientific publication. Was it your office that notified Particle, Berkeley that if they became an official part of the FSM--it was not clearly worded--that they would then lose campus recognition?

Towle: The Free Speech Movement was not a recognized student organization. How could it be?

Nathan: Yes. [Laughter]

Towle: And it wouldn't have wanted to be anyway. But I don't recall the notification to which you refer. Anything of the nature, however, probably did originate in our office. I remember Particle, Berkeley, yes. The thing I remember most about it is when it was established as a student organization, because there was some question about just what it was--how it was to be defined.



Towle: Particle, as you know, is a scientific journal put out by students in the scientific departments. They were particularly interested in being able to distribute their publication on the campus. We had a regulation; in effect, it said you just couldn't come on campus and distribute things willy-nilly. So they became what was known as an organization in Group Two, I think, which permitted them to do this. There was no particular restriction on them at all. If they had decided they wanted to be a part of the FSM they were at liberty to do this, but would lose their University status. This is the only thing that I can think of. I don't remember this particular incident, beyond the fact that they requested to be registered as a Group Two organization.

Nathan: I don't know whether they have continued publication.

Towle: I don't know either.

Nathan: Now, Spider was not a recognized group, was it?

Towle: Spider was not. Spider was just one of those things that happened. There again, I think there was far too much emphasis put on old Spider. In the first place, Spider was no worse, let me say, than many issues of the student so-called humor magazine, the Pelican. [Laughter] I said this more than once, and told the Chancellor's office this. It was a little more outspoken in some areas, such as sex. But it really was not any worse than the run of the mill Pelicans I've seen, and I've seen a good many.

I think the Spider incident happened at a time when everybody's nerves had gotten frayed. This was part of the trouble and everybody was kind of nervous about what might happen next.

Then, of course, there was the four-letter word business. In the first place I'm no authority on four-letter words and I'm not terribly interested; I don't use them and don't know the meaning of some of them. Let me say parenthetically, I learned quite a few things during the four-letter episode.  
[Laughter]



Towle: But it seemed to me that whole thing was blown up too much. I think the boy, who was not a student, who came on campus carrying the four-letter banner or whatever it was, should have been thrown off the campus without further ado. But I don't think it really was worth making another incident of something that was not that important. Now, I'm sure that probably acting Chancellor [Martin] Meyerson and President Kerr wouldn't have agreed with me, because wasn't this what precipitated their handing in their resignations?

Nathan: Yes, or their offering to resign.

Towle: My feeling at the time was that there was pressure behind them, or at least that there was pressure from elsewhere that could have resulted in their stand. But the incident itself wasn't that important.

### The Harassment Trap

Nathan: It was naughtiness.

Towle: Yes, it was naughtiness, and it was done just to provoke. When things are done deliberately to provoke and to harass, you don't fall into the trap of being harassed and provoked to the extent we were. Arthur Goldberg (it's unfortunate that he has that name, but he has), Art Goldberg was just determined, I know, to keep ferment alive. He's that kind of a person. His activities all during the FSM indicated that. I think the administration allowed itself to get trapped into something. It could have said very firmly, "We do not approve of this, we think this is not worthy of the University," or something of that sort, but not have fallen into the trap of letting it become such an incident because I don't think--well, what did it prove? It didn't prove anything, really.



Towle: To be sure, four of the persons involved had to serve time, or got fined or something, in the civil courts. They wanted to be treated as any citizen would be treated. Well, they got what they asked for. But my own feeling was that there was no point in blowing up this sorry incident to the extent that it was. Maybe this is too lenient a point of view.

Nathan: It seems realistic.

Towle: To me it was realistic. I was sorry that it came up at that particular time, because it muddied the waters further and gave the students just that much more on which to base some of their frustrations with the administration.

Nathan: They became injured all over again.

Towle: Yes, that's right, and I don't think it was worth it. At least it didn't seem so to me. I was deeply disturbed that students and others indulged in this kind of behavior, because it displayed such utter poor taste unworthy of a college campus. The students, in making this kind of spectacle of themselves, really reached a new low.

Nathan: It embarrasses you.

Towle: Yes, it embarrassed me. But, after all, if they at their ages don't know what's decent and what isn't, they're never going to learn.

Then there was the Ugly Man contest, which in a sense tied in with this. You know, the students always put up some fictitious people on their list of contestants. And they entered "Pussy Galore." I think that was exceedingly poor taste, and told some of them in the ASUC that I thought it was, but I was not going to tell them that they couldn't do it. Then the four-letter word episode followed.

Of course, they were looking for things to do which would "bug" the administration. They were annoyed at me when I turned down, for the administration, the showing of "Un Chant d'Amour" on the campus.



Towle: That was Arthur Goldberg's doing. He was determined that that film was going to be shown.

Nathan: Was this to be a benefit?

Towle: I don't recall. Benefit for themselves, I think. [Laughter] They wanted to show it in one of the University auditoriums, I've forgotten which. There, again, this was just harassment, and I knew it was harassment; but that wasn't why it was turned down. It was not considered an appropriate film.

Nathan: This was the Jean Genet film?

Towle: Yes, that's right. It was not considered an appropriate film to be shown on campus. Of course later its showing was prohibited by official censorship from being shown anywhere.

Nathan: It's the one that took place in a men's prison.

Towle: Yes. It's about homosexuals in a men's prison. Eventually it was banned, but at that time students could get hold of it. They threatened to show it at night on Sproul Hall, use Sproul Hall as a screen, if they weren't given permission to use an auditorium.

Nathan: I hadn't heard that. [Laughter]

Towle: I didn't go down to see whether they did nor not, but I'm sure they didn't; the police would have told me. I've never been sure it wasn't shown someplace, but if it was it was kept very quiet.

That was another thing, that came right along, in the early spring of 1965. It was these kinds of things that I have no sympathy with, keeping the pot boiling just to keep it boiling and just to cause harassment. In an educational setting, I find no excuse for it whatever. I was dead set against the use of civil disobedience in situations arising on a university campus. It has no place there. What you do in Mississippi, because it's a last resort, is one thing, but you do not translate that into coming onto a campus and just because you can't get what you want at the moment, using every disruptive



Towle: technique in the book. This is where I parted with the students, and I told them so. I said to a whole group of them one time, "You have a great deal on your side as far as wanting ambiguous rules being changed, and all that. But as far as I'm concerned you have no case when it comes to using the techniques of civil disobedience on a university campus such as this, where rules have been relaxed consistently to permit all shades of opinion to be heard." Famous words that meant nothing.

### The Arrests

I was deeply disturbed by the arrests. I wish there had been other ways of terminating that disruption. Admittedly, though, I don't know just exactly what they would have been in view of what was happening and the refusal of the FSM leaders to disperse and end their confrontations. But I can still wish that there could have been some other way, that's all. Maybe there wasn't. Maybe things had reached the point then where there wasn't any other way, but I found it distasteful and personally sad to have police having to cart the students off.

I'm sure this was deeply disturbing to the President and to the Chancellor--to anybody who had anything to do with it. It isn't what you want a university campus to be used for.

I didn't know the arrests were to be made that night; it apparently had been decided in a very "hush-hush" meeting that afternoon with representatives of Governor Brown, and President Kerr present as well as the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellors at Berkeley. I was not told. At first I was furious, and then, in a sense, grateful. I think I wasn't told because they all knew how deeply disturbed I would have been with a decision already agreed upon. I heard it on the radio at my home and tried to get to my office but the streets were blocked off. Dean



Towle: Williams stayed all night in our offices in Sproul Hall and kept me informed.

Nathan: Now, in one of the episodes, I guess it was the sit-in in Sproul Hall, did you leave by the way of the roof?

Towle: Yes, it was on October 1. I went out the window of one of our offices across the roof to President Sproul's office. That sort of behavior on the part of the protesters was completely unreasonable, and particularly irritating when our office was trying to keep as normal a schedule as we could in order to serve all the students.

Nathan: In all your years as a Marine you never had to go out a window or over a roof?

Towle: Never.

Nathan: It's such a climax, I don't think we can do better than this.

You're very brave to talk it through again. It's upsetting to think about it. I don't see how it could help but upset you.

Towle: It upset me, yes, at the time, as I look back on it, it was all so silly and stupid, and it did have its amusing moments behind the scenes. I don't know what they really thought they were going to gain. It was really all very childish.

Nathan: It was almost as though they were fascinated by techniques and they needed the techniques to keep the ferment alive.

Towle: That's right. I don't remember now the sequence of events but I know the first time that they sat in in Sproul Hall I walked in and out of the office without any difficulty whatever. But then by October 1, things were at such a fever pitch, they had decided then that they would try to keep the Dean of Students office, or at least the Dean of Students, hostage. This seemed to be their intent, as far as we could make out because they wouldn't



Towle: let us in or out of the office. I probably could have--yes, I could have forced my way out of the office, but the campus police wouldn't let me. They said, "You're just asking for it if you go out there in that milling, howling mob at this point," which was what it had become. They had locked arms and refused to budge.

I must admit that I was sort of tempted to try it because I didn't think any of them really would dare risk an assault charge, but you just never know. One thing I learned--I didn't learn it because I didn't have to--but I used to hear it said in the Marine Corps that an officer, or anyone who was in a position of authority never gives the men a chance to impose physical harm on him or anyone else because that immediately puts that person--not the one they're doing it to but the perpetrator--in a position where he then has to be disciplined, and probably very severely so. You don't lay yourself open, or you don't make it possible if you can help it, for other people to get themselves into that kind of a bind. This could easily have happened, of course.

Nathan: Yes, just in the jostling and the pushing.

Towle: That's right. Then you see, the police would have picked them up and have held them for assault. Of course, it would have depended on whether or not I, if I were the one involved in it, brought a formal charge. In any event, I was just flatly told by the University police, "You simply cannot go out of this office by the door. It's too dangerous a thing to do."



Over the Roof

Nathan: For the small satisfaction of proving your own courage you didn't have to do that.

Towle: No, no. I didn't have to do that. But I did have to--which was much worse--I had to climb out. As I remember it, I had on a suit with a kind of a tight skirt.

Nathan: Was it the second floor of Sproul Hall?

Towle: Yes. It was all so silly. You know the Dean of Students office has that whole south wing. I guess it was out of the office next to Betty Neely's, which is at the end of the building toward the Hearst Gymnasium side that we climbed. There is a flat roof outside of what was then the College of Letters and Science area; across from our wing, at the other end of the roof area, is President Sproul's office and the Graduate Division. The Graduate Division occupied one end of the wing comparable to ours and Mr. Sproul still has his office with Miss Robb in the end opposite us. So we got out of the window in our office and walked the length of the roof and climbed in Miss Robb's office window. Very ungracefully, I did, because I had on that skimpy skirt.

I felt like an awful fool. Then we walked out the door of the wing where Mr. Sproul's office is, down the stairs opposite those we usually used, to the first floor. As we went we looked right down the hall and could see the mob in front of the Dean of Students office. There was no attempt to stop us. I don't think they even saw us come out because they were all facing the other way. But we were on the same floor. We just came out of another entrance and went down the stairs, and out of the building.

Nathan: That particular portion of the mob was really concentrated on the Dean of Students office.

Towle: That was concentrated on the Dean of Students office, yes.



Nathan: And that was October 1.

Towle: I am pretty sure it was October 1 when this happened.

The Dean of Students office was, of course, the symbol of the administration, and we were handy. The Chancellor's office was not in the mainstream. You couldn't lean out the windows of the second floor of Dwinelle and yell to the plaza below, "Come on in and join the fight." But you could do it in Sproul Hall. It was a wonderful place to gather more recruits. [Laughter] Our office was the symbol of the administration and all the things that were wrong. With the one exception of that night, or that late afternoon, there was no attempt, really, to seriously impede the entrance and exit of people to our office. But I know that we sent the secretaries and clerks home one afternoon early because they--we call them the junior staff--were awfully nervous and worried. There was so much noise and confusion and all that they weren't getting anything done, and we thought the fewer people around the better.

Nathan: You were saying a little earlier that during all of this agitation the work of your office did go forward.

Towle: Oh, yes, it did go on, but it didn't go as well as before. How could it? I resented this: that we were giving so much time to consider the affairs that were being stirred up by a relatively small group of students, and were not effectively serving the rest of the students, which was our job.

This is what Chancellor Heyns was saying in this article yesterday, that so much of his time and that of all of the people he worked with was preempted. He ought to be putting his mind on educational programs of the whole campus and not just the violators, on situations that have been brought on by people violating rules.



A Witness for the Defense

Nathan: Right. Were you also going to talk about testifying at the trials?

Towle: I will, yes, I'd be glad to. I have my subpoena and my notes. I was subpoenaed by the defense--a witness for the defendants.

Nathan: What was it that they wanted you to do for them?

Towle: I think that the purpose was--oh, we were on very friendly terms, Mr. Bernstein and I, their lawyer.

Nathan: Was this Malcolm Bernstein?

Towle: Yes, Malcolm Bernstein. What they hoped, I believe, was that I would refute some of the things that they expected Chancellor Strong to bring out in his testimony. Now I don't know what they were. I never saw a transcript of Chancellor Strong's testimony and the papers of course--you never know just exactly what to believe.

Nathan: But you were not present in the court when he was testifying?

Towle: Oh, no, no.

Nathan: You mean that's not the way it's done?

Towle: No. None of us listened to the others testify. I think I was there the third of May (1965), the afternoon of the third of May. I expected to have them finish with me that afternoon but I was called back the next morning.

Then I was followed on the stand by Jackie Goldberg. Jackie and I sat out in the anteroom together for quite a long time until we were called.

Nathan: Was this an ordeal for you?



Towle: Not particularly. I went armed with factual material. Mr. Bernstein had told me when I had asked him what sorts of things they wanted, whether I needed to refer to some of the memoranda. He said I might have to, so I took copies of those along, things from September 14, on down through those that had been issued later. The prosecution interrupted many times. It was a pretty frustrating session, the first one.

Nathan: Now who were they?

Towle: The prosecution would be Lowell Jensen the attorney for the district attorney's office of Alameda County. In a sense, he more or less represented the University. This was a funny situation.

Nathan: Yes, wasn't it?

Towle: I don't remember who else testified for the defendants beside myself. I was the chief one from the administration that they'd subpoenaed as their witness.

Nathan: Now was Jensen just a county district attorney for Alameda County?

Towle: I think he is deputy district attorney. I guess those records are available. Max Hierich evidently used them. This was Judge Rupert Crittenden's court.

Nathan: Could you form any kind of judgment about the way the whole thing was conducted?

Towle: One of the first questions they asked me--I remember this because there was absolute silence in the courtroom and there was mumbling outside the courtroom, sort of mmmmm. They asked me if there had been any prior discussion with the students about the extension--I don't know what they called it, I've forgotten their wording--but meaning the extension of the rules to the Bancroft-Telegraph area, which after all was what this was all about. And I said, in a loud clear tone, "No."



Towle: I don't know what had been said before, but it indicated that this was one of the things that they wanted very much to be on the record.

Nathan: Of course this is something you had been well aware of all along.

Towle: Yes. They made a little drawing of Sproul, or of the Dean of Students offices in Sproul Hall, to place where students were or did certain things, I don't know what all. Then there was a question of whether they did disrupt the normal business of the office. Well, I could say that they did on more than one occasion, but I remember the drawing was simply killing. They drew it in such a way that I really didn't right away pick out where my own office was, and so I was kind of fumbling around looking at it like this. And Mario (Savio) was sitting over there in the group of students. He got up and came over and pointed it out to me. [Laughter] Everybody just howled. It really was funny.

Testifying wasn't bad, really. I didn't mind. I just told them what I knew and that's all. It was frustrating when I was being interrupted all the time by the prosecution. The testimony was being questioned as to whether that should go into the record or whether it shouldn't and there were several times that Jensen got his point. But I think Bernstein did ask certain things which he wanted. They do it in a certain way just to get it in--even though it's thrown out, it still becomes part of the court record. This is, I gathered, pretty important in a case of this sort. It was all very agreeable and Judge Crittenden is a very nice person.

I remember one thing that was awfully amusing. I had forgotten how it came up. They talked about a "vigil," having a vigil. Judge Crittenden said there's no such thing, a vigil is--what did he call a vigil...? Well, anyway, this was the wrong terminology. He said that wasn't a vigil. A vigil is something else, and he defined it. In just a very short time something was said and I mentioned the "vigil," I just didn't think. Then



Towle: I looked at him and he had a kind of a twinkle in his eye. I said, "I'm sorry, your honor, but it was called a vigil." [Laughter]

I have copies of some of the press releases of my appearance there. Very brief, but we can put those in the record if you want.

Nathan: I think that would be fine. It was in a sense part of the legal wind-up of the event.

Towle: But they weren't trying to trick me or anything like that. It was, more or less, a factual bit of information. A lot of it, of course, they knew but wanted to have on the official record.

Nathan: In the long run, actually, the prosecutor prevailed?

Towle: Yes, that's right. Yes, because those arrested were convicted in varying degrees. I have the feeling although I was there for only the two sessions, that all concerned felt that Judge Crittenden was exceedingly fair and handled a difficult situation very ably. Of course, I think it probably contributed to his own early death.

Nathan: Oh, I hadn't realized he died.

Towle: Yes, he died just about a year, a year and a half after all this was over.

Nathan: A bit earlier you mentioned the point that was made by Mr. Cunningham that he was the counsel to the Regents, not to the Chancellor. Does the Chancellor have his own legal counsel?

Towle: He always had people from the Law School he would confer with, and I'm sure he did. But I think now there is someone from the Law School who is definitely assigned to the Chancellor. There may have been such an assignment even at that time. I'm just not sure. Legal counsel is very important and is becoming more so. The University is so complicated and there are so many of these difficult legal questions as, for instance, when the revision of the rules and regulations was being discussed,



Towle: after the events, after the arrests and all. Then there was the so-called reconstruction period after Chancellor Strong left and Mr. Meyerson came in as acting Chancellor. There were a great number of meetings, including faculty and members of the administration, where many legal questions were discussed. And students, too, use legal advisers freely, much more so than in the past.

### The Unsent Letter

Something that I can mention now in this connection was my letter of December 5, 1964, which I wrote to Chancellor Strong. It was not sent to him. It was concerning the retroactive punishment for student behavior.

Nathan: This was for the four students?

Towle: Yes, the four students. I took the letter to Dr. Sherriffs; in fact, I took the original copy with me and I intended to send, as it shows, a carbon copy to President Kerr and to Vice-Chancellor Sherriffs. I did leave his copy with Vice-Chancellor Sherriffs. I did not send the original to Dr. Strong at Dr. Sherriffs' request. He wished me to wait and see what President Kerr's statement would cover at the forthcoming University meeting in the Greek Theatre. And I think that was on December 7. I wrote this on the 5th. So I agreed to hold it. But I gave Dr. Sherriffs his copy for the Chancellor's official files, so that there at least would be a record in his office concerning my strong feelings about retroactive disciplinary measures for these four students.

Nathan: Could you give the general background?

Towle: Well, yes, and I'd just as soon read the letter.

Nathan: Fine.



Towle: "Dear Chancellor Strong: Those of us in the Dean of Students office believe that much of the present unrest and mistrust on the part of students and faculty alike would be alleviated if a clear and immediate interpretation could be enunciated of the statement adopted by the Regents at their November 20th meeting concerning the use of University facilities for '...lawful campus action... not unlawful campus action.'"<sup>1</sup> (That was the phrase that stuck in everybody's craw more or less.)

"Understandably there is legitimate concern as to the meaning of the latter clause. Doubts are expressed openly that this policy can be implemented without arbitrary and unconstitutional infringements on freedom of speech. Members of the staff are particularly sensitive to its interpretation because of the numbers of students, not just those of the FSM, who are deeply concerned about the matter and who are seeking our advice and assistance in obtaining clarification. The Dean of Students staff has studied possible interpretations carefully. We are convinced that the new liberalized regulation need not be in conflict with the already stated policy outlined by President Kerr in his 1964 Davis Campus Charter Day Address. And if we are interpreting correctly his remarks on Thursday, December 3, as reported in the San Francisco Chronicle, his reiteration of that policy, as follows: 'This [meaning the FSM] protest has never been over free speech. There has been and is free speech at the University of California. The protest has been over organized political action on campus. This is now allowed with the one qualification that unlawful action cannot be mounted on campus. And it has been made abundantly clear that there is no double jeopardy involved since students would be liable for University discipline for misuse of University facilities and would not be punished for the actual off-campus violations of law.'<sup>2</sup> (I supplied italics here in the letter that I wrote.)

"It would seem abundantly clear that this application of policy will violate neither freedom nor reason. Lawful forms of protest against the



Towle: community can now be mounted from or advocated on the campus itself, with responsibility for unlawful or illegal acts, which subsequently may occur, solely a matter between the student citizen and the courts. In short, the University should not and will not attempt to determine the constitutionality of advocacy. This is a matter for the courts. Further, there will be no witch hunts and no Star Chamber proceedings. There never have been and the customary handling of student cases would continue. The debate over these and related questions has engulfed the campus for nearly three months. The Regents at their November meeting liberalized the rules concerning advocacy of political and social action on campus. A concise statement with respect to the meaning of unlawful action would, we firmly believe, clear the air and give us all opportunity to turn again to the continuing business of the University.

"In view of the Academic Senate meeting on Tuesday, December 8, where this crucial matter is sure to engage much of the discussion, I urge most strongly that such a statement from the Chancellor, and/or the President be issued either at that meeting or prior to it. We also recommend most earnestly that the University drop pending charges against the four students, Mr. Savio, Mr. Goldberg, Miss Goldberg, and Mr. Turner, since they have now subjected themselves to legal action by civil authority. For the University to continue to press charges would seem to serve no useful or helpful purpose in the current campus crisis. I for one wish to be on record as opposed to further action against these students for their alleged acts of October 1 and 2.

"Further, I urge immediate public announcement of the dropping of the charges if this recommendation receives favorable consideration. These steps would go a long way toward dispelling current mistrust and frustration and would make easier the next task before us, that of implementing locally as soon as possible those actions of the so-called Cheit report, which you have already accepted. You are aware, I am sure, that the Dean of Students



Towle: staff is ready always to offer whatever assistance it can to you personally and to your staff to help get the campus back on the road to reason and mutual trust." End of statement by K.A.T.

As you see, I felt very strongly about these October charges being picked up again in December.

Nathan: This is perfectly clear.

Towle: I thought it was. Nobody could ever claim I didn't say what I thought.

Nathan: So this letter was not sent.

Towle: It was not sent to Dr. Strong because of Dr. Sherriffs' request to me not to do so; in fact, he all but pled with me not to send it. He said that Dr. Strong was so upset at that particular time and that he was waiting to hear what the President had to say; so much hinged on that. So I said, "All right, I will defer to you, of course, but I want to have this in the record somewhere. Therefore I am leaving your copy with you--a copy which I would have sent to you, and I want it to be made part of the Chancellor's record." I don't know that it ever was, but I assume it was. It didn't seem to have done much good.

Nathan: It does seem curious to me, this protective attitude. After all, if the man is Chancellor, he holds responsibility.

Towle: I felt that way. Of course, I could have put it in an envelope and just sent it to Dr. Strong, which I ordinarily would have done anyway. I never sent things through Dr. Sherriffs. But all Dr. Strong's mail on student matters did go through Dr. Sherriffs' office on their way to the Chancellor.

I don't think it would have made any difference in this particular situation because probably things had gone too far by then and there was too much hard feeling on the higher echelons on the campus, let's say, at this particular point. I could not send the President a copy without having first sent



Towle: the official original copy to Chancellor Strong. After all the letter was addressed to him, as was proper.

Nathan: You felt at this time that you couldn't properly disagree with Mr. Sherriffs?

Towle: I disagreed with him, yes.

Nathan: I mean act contrary to his request.

Towle: It was one of those things. We were all in a crisis and we were all in this thing together in a sense. I was trying, from where I sat, to be as helpful as possible. After all, most of my job was dealing with students and I was particularly interested in having my point of view and that of the Dean of Students staff about the students' disciplinary action brought to the attention of the Chancellor. The letter really reflected the opinion of my staff; in fact, George Murphy, who had legal background, helped me draft the letter.

I could have sent it, and possibly I should have. And if his office didn't want to give it to him they didn't need to. But somehow I hesitated to do this, in view of Dr. Sherriffs' plea not to. I thought he might know other things relating to the situation that I did not.

Nathan: You don't like extra in-fighting.

Towle: No, I don't like it, and I was not in the habit of operating that way.

Nathan: Sometimes integrity can be a hindrance.

Towle: [Laughter] Well, I think maybe it is. But on the other hand, that's the way I did operate, and so the matter was dropped. But you can see that I felt very strongly about it, and I will always believe that Dr. Strong should have had the letter and decided for himself as to its validity.

Nathan: It's an enigma to me why Mr. Sherriffs didn't simply say, "I may or may not agree with you, but



Nathan: it's your letter, so ahead and send it."

Towle: When he asked me especially not to send it, I made this note at the top of the original letter. "Note. This was not sent to EWS at ACS's request. Wished to wait to see what President Kerr's statement would cover at the forthcoming meeting in the Greek Theatre on December 7. KAT gave ACS his copy of this memo for the Chancellor's official files so that she at least would be on record in the Chancellor's office." And those are my initials down here. I wrote this little squib on the top there.

Nathan: It is a very clear statement, certainly.

Towle: I have very carefully preserved the original of this because it is the one that would have gone to Chancellor Strong. And I thought that somebody ought to keep the original where it was a matter of record, if nothing else.

This is one thing which I certainly will put into my files pertaining to the FSM. It not only is part of the history of this particular time but it throws some light on my own position in this matter and I would be glad to have that known. I think many people didn't know just how I stood on this.

Nathan: This is an interesting companion piece to Jackie Goldberg's letter in that she reflects an understanding of your attitude.

Towle: Yes, I think she was understanding.

Nathan: I'm very happy that you've kept these things, even though you must have wanted to just drop a match on the whole file.

Towle: I didn't keep too much. [Laughter] I saw Mr. [James] Kantor [University Archivist] the other night and told him that I really didn't have an awful lot of material but I had kept what, from my point of view, was pertinent and he was welcome to any of it he wanted.



Nathan: We have mentioned some other letters from your file about the FSM period. Do you have the newspaper clippings too? They could all go to the University Archives.

Towle: This [box] is filled with clippings. I'm just wondering whether the Archives really wants all of these clippings, pamphlets, handbills, and the like.

Nathan: They would be delighted to have them.

Towle: Of course, they have access to all of this material through their own collections, through the newspapers and all.

Nathan: Interestingly enough, very often the Archives simply does not have the most obvious kind of thing because no one has deposited it. If they have any duplicates, then that is useful also. But I think this would be a great addition.

Towle: Here, for example, is the Burns Report. And the Slate Supplement and Slate's booklet about the Regents, and the Spider.

Nathan: Oh, I think this is an elegant collection.

Towle: It's not in any particular order. Here is an envelope labelled "the four-letter word clippings." That was about the obscenity bit in the spring, in March, 1965, after the FSM tumultuousness had quieted down.

Well, anyway, the Archives certainly are welcome to all of this, and I'm glad to know they may be useful. Makes one feel kind of important, too!

In summary, there are two things that stand out with respect to the fall of 1964 disturbances. One, how completely unprepared administrators--and faculty members, too--were for the crisis. And, two, how well prepared the leaders of the student group were. I shall never forget my own surprise, and I'll have to admit, chagrin, too, at



Towle: the effective control the student leaders of the revolt had.

Nathan: Over the students?

Towle: I meant just the way they had themselves organized. Their walkie-talkie system, for example, [laughter] by which they could give and receive orders from their compatriots anywhere on campus at almost any time, was just a revelation to me. I had had no experience whatever with this kind of instant communication, and it was devastating to say the least. You'd walk out of Sproul Hall and you'd hear somebody behind you saying--not anything derogatory about me as a person or anything--but just giving directions as to what was going on to somebody probably over on North Gate or somewhere like that. I just couldn't get over it. [Laughter]

Nathan: Moses Hall got a little mill-in because the students were trying to find the Letters and Science office. There was a walkie-talkie testing session as we came back from lunch, before the mill-in arrived. But that was later, of course. You were in on the beginning of all this.

### Arimony and Frustration

Towle: Now, after having talked into the Oral History tape all this time, I ought to be able to do anything.

Nathan: [Laughter] Of course. I'll see you on a picket line next.

Towle: In view of all that has happened on the campus since then, nothing would surprise me now. But two years ago it was quite a different story. And the acrimoniousness and bitterness which were never far from the surface in those long months of



Towle: that academic year really were a shattering experience for one who had always felt a close rapport with students--who not only felt but actually had had a very good rapport with students and wanted nothing so much as to find a solution to the misunderstanding and ill-will which the FSM movement had engendered, and which was tearing--as you well know--the University apart.

After it was all over, and for months after I retired, I had a feeling of great personal loss and sadness not easily put into words. I love the University and it had been so much a part of my life for so long. It was quite devastating to see so much of what I believed it stood for, almost made a mockery of, as it certainly was in those early months of the FSM movement.

Nathan: You were saying that the episode was so acrimonious in nature.

Towle: It was, you know. This was the thing that was so devastating, really, about the whole thing. And then another thing--I may have mentioned this earlier, it was all so grim. I'm just not used to working in such a grim atmosphere. Very few people's sense of humor stood up well when distrust and disparagement flowered. I must admit that somehow the light touch was hard to come by most of the time.

Nathan: When you say you are not accustomed to working in such a grim atmosphere, and you have had two tours of duty with the Marines, one in wartime, I think this is really quite a significant comment.

Towle: Oh! The Marines were quite entertaining as well as purposeful much of the time, you know. They had a job to do and they did it well always. During wartime it was grim, yes, but I loved my work at the University, and always found it interesting and pleasant, and stimulating. I worked hard and I used to work long hours, but that didn't make any difference: I enjoyed what I was doing. But then, almost overnight, to have to force one's self to face some of those disheartening events, some of



Towle: them so calculated to bring about dissension and misunderstanding, was so discouraging and frustrating. The frustration was as difficult to take as anything else. You felt you weren't getting anywhere and all these people were telling you what you should and shouldn't do and everybody had ideas--none of them much good.

Nathan: Just this wading around in molasses.

Towle: That's right.

Nathan: Just dreadful. And then when you did have a perfectly good point of view you were asked please not to mention it.

Towle: As I say, I doubt that it would have made much difference. I felt afterward that I would have felt better if a copy of that letter, for example, had gone to President Kerr. Not that it would have made too much difference, maybe, but he would have known how I felt about the situation. And so would the Chancellor. But the Chancellor was the one I had in mind, I was trying to help him out. He was in a box at this point. I realized it. Nobody realized it more than I. You know there was just too much of this business--we'll stick to our guns or else. Sometimes you can't do that.

Nathan: I wish I had a picture showing you with your jaw set saying, "We'll stick to our guns." [Laughter] Something is lost in the verbal form.

Towle: Maybe just as well.

#### Lifting the Speakers' Ban - 1963

My own position with respect to the matter of student rights and privileges in the context of the campus was always perfectly clear to me, and I think



Towle: to those I worked with. I can say without equivocation that no one stood more staunchly over the years for the aims of many generations of students to have the University embrace a generous open forum policy for the advocacy of ideas. My position was stated clearly in a letter of June 11, 1963, to the then president of the California Alumni Association in response to one from him addressed to members of the Alumni Council, on which I was serving at that particular time, seeking advice from council members on how to answer criticism from alumni. There were many of them, I might add, who did not favor the proposed lifting of the "speaker ban."

At that time, I said in part in my letter to him, "I am hopeful that many alumni, and I am one of them, care about the University's standing up and being counted as a champion of a true open forum and freedom to hear and be heard and exerting leadership in that direction. I have been gratified by the gradual liberalization of University policies, a mark of maturity befitting an institution approaching its centennial." End of famous last words. [Laughter]

At no time did I question that students, along with all citizens, have inalienable constitutional rights. I subscribe to the belief, however, that a democratic society cannot exist without certain rules and regulations which in effect guarantee everyone equal rights. There is a distinction, I believe, between rights and privileges. Students enjoy privileges by reason of being students, including those of admission by meeting entrance requirements, receiving instruction, and using campus facilities for authorized purposes. By the same token the University has the right to establish rules and regulations for the orderly conduct of its business, which it quite properly expects its students, who enter the University voluntarily, to observe.

The right of students to question the validity or practicality of regulations is, of course, implicit, and proper channels have always been



Towle: available for expressing grievances and seeking changes. Attempts to bring about change by violence or other means negate the very values an educational institution worthy of the name should stand for. My great point of departure with the FSM leaders, which I made known on more than one occasion, was their resort to civil disobedience and disorder. I was sympathetic with many of their desires to have the rules literalized, but as far as their resorting to disruptive tactics, I wanted no part of it. I think I made this perfectly clear. Of course, we certainly didn't see eye-to-eye on that.

I could see nothing in the FSM movement which justified that kind of behavior, really.

The University of California has become one of the great educational institutions of the world because as an institution of the State it has insisted on maintaining its independence. Presumably its regulations, although they may be modified from time to time to meet changing conditions, guarantee such independence to the benefit of students and faculty alike. And I'm sure that administrative procedures are designed to assist in the orderly conduct of business, so that the University's main purposes as an educational institution may be fulfilled.

I can just hear Paul Goodman's vociferous disagreement at this point. [Laughter]

Nathan: What do you think of the argument I'm sure they gave justifying civil disobedience, the argument that there was no alternative?

Towle: I don't agree with it at all. They didn't try any alternative. When they left my office, on that Monday morning in September, 1964, they had their minds made up then that they were going out and raise hell. They had television all set up. They had an idea that my answer was going to be what it was. It had to be. They launched forth then. They had a television at the entrance and everything was all set to go. I think their plans were pretty well formulated by then--I don't know that they all



Towle: expected to have them go to the lengths that they did. But I'm sure that they were committed then to acts of civil disobedience. In fact, I am quite certain that this must have been so.

Nathan: This is not a question of being driven to it, but determining that this would be the method.

Towle: I am sure that they probably had spent the weekend planning their action. I don't know that for a fact, of course, but I do know that when I gave them the word that I could do nothing more about changing the regulations to meet their wishes, that I had done my best and had talked with the Chancellor, they left the office with the statement, "This is not enough." That was exactly what they said, without giving me any further opportunity to suggest alternatives for the administration. They filed out of the office and went out to the corner of Bancroft and Telegraph where the television cameras were waiting for them.

Nathan: After having received from you the statement that you would not be able to do anything for them on those two points, what else could they have been expected to do? Not that I would expect you to lay out their campaign for them.

Towle: I don't know. There was Jackie Goldberg's statement, I think, to me. I don't want to put words in Jackie's mouth, but I think she felt, and possibly justifiably so, that the University should have made greater effort to try to get them all together again.

Nathan: You mean administration spokesmen and students?

Towle: Yes. Of course, we had planned a meeting for that afternoon, but by that time they were taking over. They had decided that Sproul Hall was to be occupied. We didn't call it a mill-in. Now I'm interested in all the new terminology. Things are mill-ins now. That was kind of a sit-in, I think, wasn't it?

Nathan: Yes, I think so.



Towle: I don't know. I've thought about it a great deal, actually, as to what might have been done. My own feeling is that there are two sides to these things and that both sides have to be willing to give a little, try to work things out. I don't know, maybe we didn't seem to be willing enough. I can't believe we in any way tried to discourage them from coming to us. Our offices were filled with students all the time coming and going about this and that, even though they were presumably furious with us they kept coming in. [Laughter]

Nathan: And being furious in your office.

Towle: Yes, that's right. But I don't know.

#### The Administration as a Target for Grievances

Nathan: It was the breaking off that you could see as an overt act.

Towle: Yes, that's it. This, of course, was the thing that disturbed me more than anything else, this breaking off--where there was no meeting of the minds whatever. The administration by this time, as far as the students were concerned, was being completely discredited, which of course was not fair really. You may expect students to feel that way when nerves are frayed and tempers high. And the "administration" is always fair game. But I must say that some of the faculty were not much better as far as their relations went; they just took up cudgels against the administration, too. The administration is an awfully easy mark, of course, because it's impersonal in some ways so you can easily attach dislike to it, very simply. Then the administration is always looked upon as something that's trying to take away your rights or something of that sort. I'm sure that this is the way we were



Towle: looked upon. And then you know there is a great carry-over of the image of a dean from high school, where the dean is a disciplinary figure.

Nathan: That's an interesting idea. Of course, the dean of boys is the punisher.

Towle: Yes. You have an occupational hazard when you go into this business to start with just because so many students do carry over this feeling from secondary schools. I don't say that these students did particularly, but this is very easy to come by, this feeling.

Nathan: Somebody suggested that some members of the faculty were still resentful about the decision to change to the quarter system.

Towle: Yes, I think that some of them were. There were many frustrations on campus that had nothing whatever to do with free speech. But here was this confrontation, ready-made for everybody to get involved in who had any grievance of any kind. The quarter system could have been a pent-up resentment against the administration. The Berkeley faculty voted it down, you know.

Nathan: Yes, that's quite true.

Towle: They voted it down, I think, by a narrow margin, and there was much bitterness about it, a feeling that the administration had sold them down the river and all that kind of thing.

#### The Feeling of Impersonality

Then, of course, there was also a great deal of dissatisfaction which I think many faculty members were unwilling to recognize--dissatisfaction not only with the advising system, but with the



Towle: relationship between the faculty and the students. The faculty were too busy to see students and to be bothered with students. We got that kind of complaint all the time. "I've been to see him and he doesn't care whether I come or not," or "I've been to his office and he's never there." There may have been some reaction to these often expressed complaints. The faculty reaction may have been one somewhat of guilt, too, because they hadn't been as alert to student needs--to the need of the student in this complex University, to have a kind of a personal relationship, to the need for them to have a sense of--oh, I hate to use the word identity because that's overworked, but it's really what the students lacked, what they missed, this feeling of knowing their faculty. This is not true of departments like engineering, some of the smaller colleges, because they all do know their students and they have very excellent rapport with them all the time. But it's the large ones--it's the humanities and the large social science classes where there is so much that is impersonal.

Now I assume that it has changed a good deal, but I don't know. I don't know how much difference the Muscatine Report really made.<sup>1</sup> Unless you're right on the campus now it would be very hard to know really what's going on. It's an interesting time, certainly. I was impressed with the Muscatine Report, but I don't know whether its findings and recommendations helped do away with some of this impersonal feeling that many students felt instinctively.

This is one thing that students said themselves about the FSM. For the first time some of them who had never been involved in anything became involved in the movement because they had a chance to become a part of a group and to feel that they were important. I think this is why it gathered

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<sup>1</sup> California, University, Academic Senate, Berkeley Division, Select Committee on Education, 1965-66, Education at Berkeley: Report [Muscatine Report] (Berkeley and Los Angeles; University of California Press, 1968).



Fowle: into the fold so many, eventually, many of the younger students who had no commitments whatever and who really didn't know what this was all about except here was a chance to take part with other students in something which they felt was worthwhile.

Nathan: Whereas perhaps some of this feeling was experienced in earlier college generations through activities...

Towle: That's right.

Nathan: Not any more.

Towle: No, not any more. And I think the University itself just hadn't kept pace with its growth or hadn't even realized what was taking place as far as the individual student was concerned. We were, of course, building more residence halls and that helped some--having students able to live on campus. In the old days, there wasn't any such place, and nobody cared. You were supposed to come to college and get your work done and find your friends where you could. If you didn't have a good time it was just too bad. It was just one of those things.

But I think that the residence hall program did change the complexion of the campus in many ways and gave many students a feeling of belonging to the campus for the first time. And they liked living on the campus in those days. Now it seems as if everyone wants to live in an apartment, and not on the campus. The residence halls are still there to be lived in, and I gather they are reasonably well-filled all the time. They provide a sort of a focal point for student interests which had never been there in the earlier days. This is important and very good.

I was on one of the subcommittees when these halls were being planned, and one of the things that bothered me, and others who sat on the committee and who were going to be dealing with students--the fact that there wasn't too much



Towle: attention paid to the things in the halls that would attract the individual students in their everyday interests and activities. Much thought was put on making the halls handsome and all the rest of it, but not so much on what was going to go into them as far as student activities and student needs were concerned. Those of us who were on the subcommittees had to fight like steers to get some of these ideas across and we didn't succeed too well in the earliest stages.

Nathan: Just the amenities of living there.

Towle: That's right. And, you know, all of these feelings had been pent up, somewhere.

Nathan: So the frustration level had already...

Towle: Built up. This is why the FSM movement had such a sudden appeal to so many people. Here was something you could really hang onto and here was something you could really get at the University with. You had a kind of a crowbar and you could really use it, quite effectively, too.

I don't know whether you want many of these ideas or not.

### The Changing Character of the Movement

Nathan: Let's go on with them. I think they are useful.

Towle: In its incipiency the Free Speech Movement was, I'm certain, motivated by students sincerely dedicated to a literalization of policies which would bring about greater freedoms in the areas of political and social action on the campus. I think you can see that just from the groups of students that came in to see me with their petition. Many of those students really were sincerely motivated.



Towle: It became quite obvious, however, as events progressed, that the demonstrations became cloaked by more militant individuals in the handy catch-all slogan of "Free Speech" and "Civil Rights" in order to capture sympathy and support by clouding the real issue. I submit that neither was really the central issue.

It became in essence a power struggle in which a relatively few malcontents and dissidents were bent on using the University for their own, essentially selfish, needs and purposes. As I say, this is what I think eventually happened. Events at Berkeley and elsewhere since then only lend additional credence to this statement. I can be all wrong but this is the way I read the signs. Threats and defiance bordering on complete disregard for the rights and freedoms of others, in short, anarchy, seem to have become the order of the day.

In 1964-65 the University attempted to use all the good offices at its command to prevent precipitous action. That it bungled in some of its efforts from the highest to the lowest echelon no one close to the situation can honestly deny. But it was not a time of evil men in command planning evil things. And when I say men I mean women, too.

It was a time of great travail for many high-minded, devoted, and trusted persons who believed in the University and her students and who sought fair and equitable solutions to the grave problems which beset the campus. A great and proud University deserves better than the wish of a few malcontents to discredit its very being and bring it to its knees. This is as true today, 1967, as it was in 1964. Then the slogan used to justify open sesame for all illegal acts was Free Speech. Today it is basically the draft or the Vietnam situation, coupled with a good many racist overtones, too. Those are my thoughts on the subject.

Nathan: I'm very glad to have them. I do think that being right in the middle of something concentrates the vision rather well.



Towle: It hasn't been easy, you know, to put all this in words because I lived so closely with it and was so much a part of it and so terribly torn by it. I really couldn't talk about it for a long time with any sense of equanimity. I didn't refuse to talk about it, but I didn't want to talk about it.

Nathan: Did you hate to relive it?

Towle: I was afraid I might. But I think enough time has elapsed so that in a way I'm really kind of relieved to go over a lot of these things.

Nathan: I'm so happy to hear that, because I did have some qualms about pursuing the matter.

Towle: I think it has to be said. As a matter of fact, I think in justification to myself, some of these things have to be said, not that I took any more knocks than many others. But I know there was misunderstanding, certainly among the students, about my part in much of this. This was the thing that I cared most about. It didn't matter to me about the other at all. I couldn't have cared less whether Professor Boo or Professor X or Professor Y thought this, that or the other thing of me as an individual. Many of them were my friends anyway. There were a few, of course, that weren't. Some of them blamed the Dean of Students and the Dean of Students office particularly for a whole lot of things which, if they had known were not so. That sort of thing never bothered me.

But it did bother me to feel that I had lost the confidence of many students. This was not true of most students, because most students knew perfectly well that I and my office were still the same as we always had been, as far as their interests were concerned.

It's pretty devastating to suddenly feel the complete animosity of a group of students, a thing that you never thought possible. They felt very strongly that the Dean of Students office was letting them down in many areas. They didn't stop to think, but then youth doesn't. This is why I



Towle: really didn't hold it against the students, because this is part of their youth. They never stopped to think that there was another side and that I and others who were in administrative positions at that particular time where we had to deal with these situations every day, had to do certain things because of the University itself. We were required to. You don't think about those things. You don't expect students to think about them; they are thinking of their own concerns. But it doesn't make you feel any less unhappy to lose the confidence of some of the students, which, of course, was bound to happen. This is one reason that I value that little note from Jackie [Goldberg] because I think she understood to a certain degree. I thought she was very perceptive. She seemed to understand exactly what was happening as far as I and the other members of the staff were concerned. We were in a bind. And pretty powerless to do very much about it.

Nathan: Yes, what an uncomfortable spot, as you were saying earlier, to have to enforce rulings with which you didn't entirely agree.

Towle: There are lots of things that should have been done differently. But I'm not going to make any attempt to try to unscramble those. I think that's just an exercise in futility, really.

Nathan: I do think that your pulling out these three episodes, the deeding of the strip, the Bellquist Committee report and the Cunningham letters, these three events that weren't quite events and that never quite came to fruition are very helpful in setting the structure for the whole thing.

Towle: I think they are, too. And I believe my unsent letter about those four students is also.

As I said right from the beginning, this is not intended to be a history of the FSM, that's not the purpose of it. Because that can be acquired--well, from Max Hierich's famous Ph.D. dissertation--famous now partly because we've quoted from it quite a bit. I think he really



Towle: has the nub of the whole thing there in his fine dissertation. And the February, 1965, California Monthly has that excellent running account of events as they happened. I mentioned this earlier. Anybody who wants to find out how it started and who the people were, can look especially at Max Hierich's dissertation. He's interviewed almost everybody who really had any really serious connection with the FSM. I'm amazed at the amount of interviewing he did.

Nathan: That was certainly an admirable piece of work. What we were hoping to get from you, and I think we have, was your view, and your recollection and your judgment now that you think back on it. And I do think that you've done a beautiful job. When you see the transcription, there very well may be things that you want to add, some comments or insertions.

Towle: I think there may be. But I can tell better when I get the blue pencil in the little hot hand, you know. [Laughter]

Nathan: How delightful it will be to have an editor doing her own editing. May I encourage you not to edit out, but to add in. Please, don't edit out.

Towle: I won't edit out except where it seems to me redundant or when it's something that really isn't very relevant.

Many alumni, I think, are very much perturbed at the younger generation of students and really don't look at upheavals on campus quite as sanguinely as I do. I believe there is some major unrest in every college generation. You can go all the way back; I'm sure that there has always been some disturbance of some sort. Admittedly today there seems to be more unrest on campuses everywhere. But then there are more students, and the campuses are so much bigger, and the political and social issues are in many ways more far-reaching today than they have ever been. There are more frustrations and more disillusionment, and many more concerned persons,



Towle: especially among the younger generation.

I don't like to see this continued agitation on campuses. I think that to disrupt the purposes of a university and to have so much of its time occupied with just keeping things reasonably quiet so that some modicum of teaching can go on is most regrettable. There is so much to be done, so much that ought to be done, and that would be done if people like the Chancellor or the President or whoever didn't have to spend so much time figuring out how to deal with some of these other problems, often engendered by dissidents and malcontents. These problems don't solve themselves, unfortunately.

As I have remarked earlier, I thought that Chancellor Heyns' statement to the faculty published in the November 13 [1967] issue of the University Bulletin, "Our Failure as Educators," was an awfully good one. It was his plea to the faculty as well as students urging them to put reason above passion. He stresses, too, that the University does have more important things to do than be continually trying to quell student disruptions of one sort and another. And some of them aren't even student disruptions.

I was with friends a couple of weekends ago who said, "Why can't you keep non-students off the campus? What's the matter with the University? Why can't these people be kept off? Why do we still have to have those people around?" My friends were all University of California graduates.

I tried to explain that there is no way you can keep people from walking onto a campus. And I don't think you'd want to.

Nathan: Build a big wire fence around with electric charges.

Towle: Exactly. This is why I'm concerned about the centennial year, coming as it does next year, in the midst of so much of this disruption. I think that the University does need the support of its alumni. It needs it not only financially--heaven knows it needs financial aid, and many students benefit from the support that alumni give. But it



Towle: also needs the support morally and every other way. It's terribly important to have your alumni behind you. I'm hoping that the people who have worked so hard on the centennial aren't in for a great disappointment. I'm not doing anything with it myself; at least I'm not on committees or anything of that sort. This is probably just as well, but this doesn't prevent me from talking about the University and its needs and about what I hope the centennial will bring forth. I want it to be a good year for the University in every way. There are so many little things which are being picked on by the students which I think are so silly and petty. Now this latest business of wanting to change the name of the theater.

Nathan: Oh, Zellerbach Hall?

Towle: Yes. The Regents have decided on the Zellerbach as a name. What difference does it make?

Nathan: The Zellerbachs gave the money for it, I guess.

Towle: Certainly. They gave over a million dollars or so, didn't they?

Nathan: Yes. It was a substantial amount. I don't know how much.

Towle: After all, you know, to me this is awfully childish. I don't mean childish giving the million, but childish of people to get steamed up about the name. I don't see why it shouldn't be so named.

Nathan: As you were saying earlier, somehow the idealistic part has dwindled and we're in the power struggle.

Towle: We're in the power struggle business, and this is what I object to and with which I have no patience. This is what's happening over at San Francisco State, another example of a power struggle, of the most virulent kind, really.

Nathan: It is degrading for an institution.

Towle: It is degrading for an educational institution. It's degrading for the persons involved in it, too. I



Towle: suppose Berkeley probably has the distinction, if you can call it that, of being in the vanguard of student disruptions. The events of 1964-65 were the forerunner of a lot of them. I have often wondered just what would have happened if the FSM hadn't happened when it did. I somehow think there would have been other causes for student disfavor and confrontation. Otherwise, I can't see how they could have spread nation-wide so fast. The times seem to have been ripe.

I wish the "revolt" had started somewhere else if it was going to start! But Berkeley was just at the right stage for it, possibly even without the famous or infamous September 14 memorandum. That fanned the flame, but considering that revolt has gone all over the country now, in varying degrees, and for varying reasons, many of them just as illogical, I wonder sometimes if our events were not just part of what was to come, nation-wide, even world-wide.

I prefer the articulate students of the sixties. I think they are much more exciting and interesting than the inarticulate disinterested ones of the fifties. But there have been times when I could have wished all that articulateness could be better directed.



Note for filers:

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This 1960 letter to Chancellor

Seaborg was brought to my attention  
in the spring of 1965, after the  
period of worst crisis had passed.

I never saw it before or did  
anyone in the Chancellor's office  
ever show it to me. I am in-  
clined to believe it was filed  
+ forgotten when Dr Seaborg left.

If had I, for instance, known  
about it when I became D/S  
in 1961, I certainly would have  
attempted to have the Univ Reg's  
re-written to incorporate all the  
points it brings up, or at the  
very least brought them to EWS's  
attention. We might have saved  
much of our 1964-65 travail.

KAT,



July 28, 1960

Chancellor Glenn T. Seaborg  
Office of the Chancellor  
3335 Dwinelle Hall  
Campus

Dear Chancellor Seaborg:

Your Special Committee on the Administration of the Regulations on Student Government, Student Organizations, and Use of University Facilities held its initial meeting on March 27 and then met regularly during April, May, and June. Vice Chancellor Sherriffs and Dean Shepard participated in the Committee's deliberations.

Our major assignment involved the booklet entitled "Information for Student Organizations," which has been prepared in the Office of the Dean of Students as a revision of similar booklets that have been distributed in past years. We spent many hours reviewing the wording of the booklet and the various Dean's Office forms that supplement it, and the final draft -- attached hereto -- is ready for your approval we believe.

We decided there would be little value for you in a detailed summary of our discussions. In those discussions, however, it was necessary for us not only to consider problems of interpretation that have arisen as to the President's directives, but also to concretize the variant policies that seem to inhere therein. Our discussions have led us to unanimous agreement that the following modifications of the directives and related rules would be desirable, and we list them so that you may advise the President if that seems appropriate:

1. Petitions. Paragraph 3 of the President's Memorandum of September 9, 1949 should be amended by deleting these bracketed and underlined words:

A petition addressed to non-University authorities must not (identify the petition as coming from the University of California or identify the signators with the University of California, or) in any way imply the endorsement of the University of California.



2. Political Activity. Paragraph IIIA of the Regulation on Use of University Facilities restricts the soliciting of political party membership and the supporting or opposing of particular candidates to meetings where candidates or their representatives speak. We believe that restriction is unjustified. We see no reason why audiences limited to the campus community, should be denied the full range of political discussion -- whether or not there are accompanying speeches by "candidates for public office (or their designated representatives)."

3. Funds Raising. Paragraph IVA of the Regulation on Use of University Facilities also seems too restrictive. We believe that funds-raising rules are required only to preclude exploitation of captive audiences and University personnel. Why should political and other groups be denied the privilege of a "collection?"

4. Literature. Paragraph IVD of the Regulation on Use of University Facilities implies censorship of literature. Entirely apart from questions of free speech, we believe that the administrative burden is not justified and that the University's only legitimate concern relates to littering and other custodial matters.\*

5. The ASUC Executive Committee. we believe that Rule 4 of the Regulation on Student Government should be modified in accordance with the October 12th recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom. (see VI Ac. Sen. Record, November 23, 1959, pp. iv and v) The attached booklet entitled "Information for Student Organizations" contains this rule (p. 3):

(w)hen a recognized student organization wishes to take a position on an off-campus issue, it must preface its statement with "we the members of (name of organization) ..." or any similar phraseology indicating that the organization is not representing the University or the student body.

Our recommendation is that the Administration accept that approach generally. Because of the uniqueness of the ASUC Constitution, however, we suggest that the Executive Committee be held to a prescribed formula such as "we the members of the ASUC Executive Committee" or "we the majority of the ASUC Executive Committee."

Sincerely yours,

R. G. Bressler, Jr.  
F. L. Kidner  
F. C. Newman  
R. N. Walpole

E. C. Bellquist, Chairman

\*In general we believe that the campus community should have at least the privileges regarding University facilities that the Civic Center ... assumes to citizens and others regarding public school facilities. (See Education Code, § 16556 et seq.).



May 3, 1961

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COPY

VICE CHANCELLOR SHERIFFS:

RE: University Regulation -  
Distribution of Literature

In your memorandum of April 14, 1961, you raised some questions relative to the unduly amended paragraph IV, D of the Regulation on the Use of University Facilities. You have posed some hypothetical questions concerning the posting of religious material on University bulletin boards, and have indicated you desire my comments with respect thereto.

As a matter of general policy, I usually am reluctant to answer hypothetical questions, and would prefer to reserve any opinion until and unless an actual case arises. This policy is particularly important with respect to constitutional problems, since the legal guidelines in such cases are most imprecisely drawn. Nevertheless, I will provide a brief indication of the general considerations involved in the problems you have raised.

With respect to the religious problem, I note that the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution has been interpreted to establish a "wall of separation" between Church and State. This concept is recognized in the Regulation on the Use of University Facilities, which provides, in paragraph III, B that "University facilities shall not be used for the purpose of religious worship, exercise or conversion." With this in mind, it would appear legally permissible, and within the scope of University Regulations, to permit the posting on-campus of announcements of religious meetings at off-campus locations. Posters which attempt directly to advocate religious conversion should not be allowed. You will be required to use your judgment in those situations to which you have made reference wherein a "persuasively" entitled meeting is announced. If, in such situations, it appears that religious conversion on University property is attempted by the use of such a title, you should prohibit such practice. Obviously no definite advice can be given as to where a dividing line between permissive and non-permissive "titles" should be drawn. In most cases, however, an attempt to use a title in the manner you have suggested will be apparent.

In connection with posting of political material, however, a different situation exists. There is no Federal constitutional prohibition of such activities, and the State Constitution and University Regulations require only that the University, as such, may not become involved in political activities. Our Regulations, for some time, have permitted political speakers on campus under certain circumstances. The new Regulation on posting and distribution of literature would seem similarly to permit the posting and distribution of partisan political literature. It is my understanding that such a situation was in mind when the new paragraph IV, D was drafted.



Vice Chancellor Sherriffs  
May 3, 1961  
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With the foregoing in mind, I should note that many situations will arise in connection with campus activities which do involve, but only tangentially, legal questions. In such situations, in view of the considerations peculiar to a student community, which are involved, it may well be more desirable for you, with your deep understanding of the campus and its citizens, to resolve the matter administratively rather than to request a legal opinion which unfortunately cannot be adjusted to these peculiar considerations.

In any event, if a specific problem does arise in which a substantial legal question is presented, I will be glad to render assistance.

Thomas J. Cunningham  
Vice President and  
General Counsel

cc: President Clark Kerr  
Chief Campus Officers



Confidential

September 18, 1964  
Reception at University House

Chancellor Strong's Meeting with Kerr  
(Sherriffs, Towle and Hafner present for  
all or part of the discussion)

The President said there is to be no distribution of action literature on campus anywhere. This means no supporting one candidate or another, one issue or another, no literature on such things as a call for a meeting to organize a picket or stage a demonstration. Speakers can advocate causes and take stands on issues but cannot distribute literature such as bumper strips.

There is to be no fund raising or receiving of donations for causes (except, of course, for those approved by the Chancellor).

The area on Bancroft and Telegraph between the posts and the plaques is University property and there are to be no speakers there - no literature distributed which can be claimed is propaganda - no tables except that the Dean of Students will permit a limited number of tables which are to be manned at all times. A poster may be affixed to the table. Otherwise no posters.

On an experimental basis we will extend Hyde Park area on the steps of Sproul Hall as long as the crowd does not interfere with the flow of traffic. Speakers must be students or members of the faculty - not the public.

Kerr wants Cunningham to see the paper which Towle will hand to the students at her meeting with the group on Monday morning - to check for freedom of speech and assembly points.

Cunningham and CK do not agree on the place of the University. Cunningham sees it as public property and Kerr does not.

Kerr understands that we are in an awkward position since we didn't crackdown on the area before when we knew it was University property. Therefore it is essential that the explanation be given very carefully to the students and the faculty. Namely, that no rule has been modified - that the Boundary between the city and University property was thought to be at the posts and this is not the case, it is the plaques. Students got their permits from the City believing it was City property - now it is clear that it is not City property, we must follow the University regulations Sherriffs - ES wants the statement made just like the above.

KCM



September 18, 1964

VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL COUNSEL THOMAS CUNNINGHAM

Dean of Students Katherine Towle was given the attached document this morning. It represents which are in fact demands by the political and social action groups on the campus.

*Received Oct 1st  
of September 18  
1964*

The area at Bancroft and Telegraph has developed into an area of wholesale misuse of University facilities in the opinion of the Chancellor, myself, and the Dean of Students. In any event, to clean up this area, especially for this emotional period before the November elections, the Chancellor has designated the 26 feet of University property, between the Berkeley sidewalk and the cement posts, as an area for the distribution of legitimate literature, but he insists that the University rules be strictly enforced on posters, fund-collecting, for off-campus purpose, and speakers. This, you will realize, is not an area which has been previously designated as one of those available for any of the above. We are clearly in for some demonstrations, but so far, the press and the student body seem to be with us. I am informing you of the particular demands attached in case we should be cautioned on any matter of law, or any misinterpretation of University policy.

We have just received these demands and demonstrations are apparently scheduled for Monday. I apologize for sending you a rush item.

Alex C. Sherriffs  
Vice Chancellor - Student Affairs

Enclosures

cc: President Kerr



Petition given to me by  
Sept 17, 1964 [Chancellor]

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We are students--American students--who believe in the right and duty to hold, relate, and advocate positions and actions that reflect our desire to promote a continually improving world. The University especially is under a moral obligation to insure that full discussions of the important ideas and issues affecting our society and world continue.

But to discuss is not enough. The democratic process is one of carrying into action the ideas and issues freely aired in free discussion. Free speech means not only freedom to discuss issues in abstract intellectual terms, but means freedom to advocate actions based on such discussion.

The intersection at Bancroft and Telegraph represents the most frequently travelled area near the campus. And because each of us takes seriously this obligation to be informed participants in our society--and not armchair intellectuals-- we feel that this location alone guarantees not only our right to speak, but to be heard! It is a valueless right to have free speech if our corresponding rights to reach people with our ideas and to advocate action on them are not protected.

All of us subscribe to Chancellor Strong's statement that "The University is no ivory tower shut away from the world, and from the needs and problems of society." To eliminate the use of Bancroft and Telegraph is to shut this University up in an ivory tower. It is to limit the freedom of ideas which is necessary to produce truly educated citizens of a democratic society.

We believe that the continued use of the Bancroft and Telegraph privileges will cause Chancellor Strong's goals of "exposure to critical questions and search for knowledge" to be furthered.



And, therefore, we respectfully submit for consideration as policy the following:

1. Tables for the student organizations at Bancroft and Telegraph will be manned at all times.
2. The organizations shall provide their own tables and chairs; no University property shall be borrowed.
3. There shall be no more than one table in front of each pillar and one at each side of the entrance way. No tables shall be placed in front of the entrance posts.
4. No posters shall be attached to posts of pillars. Posters shall be attached to tables only.
5. We shall make every effort to see that provisions 1-4 are carried out and shall publish such rules and distribute them to the various student organizations.
6. The tables at Bancroft and Telegraph may be used to distribute literature advocating action on current issues with the understanding that the student organizations do not represent the University of California--thus these organizations will not use the name of the University and will disassociate themselves from the University as an institution.
7. Donations may be accepted at the tables.

Slate	Youth for Goldwater
Campus Core	Student Committee for Travel
University Society of Individualists	to Cuba
Du Mois Club of Berkeley	Student Committee for "No on
Young People's Socialist League	Prop. 14." (Students for
University Young Republicans	Fair Housing)
University Young Democrats	University Friends of SNCC
Young Socialist Alliance	Students for Democratic Society
Campus Women for Peace	College Young Republicans
	Committee for Independent Political Action
	Youth Committee Against Prop. 14
	Independent Socialist Club



## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL COUNSEL

Z01 - 10

September 21, 1964

COPY

VICE CHANCELLOR ALEX C. SHERIFFS:

Re: University Regulations -- Use  
of University Facilities

In your memorandum of September 18, 1964, you asked certain questions concerning various documents relating to the Bancroft-Telegraph speaker area. You enclosed a copy of Dean Towle's statement on the matter as well as a response thereto by student groups. Subsequently some modifications were made in the previous policy. It is my understanding, however, that the Berkeley administration, while it will permit the distribution of literature in the Bancroft-Telegraph area, will insist on a distinction between literature which is for or against a proposition or a candidate and literature which urges a specific vote or action for or against a particular proposition or candidate or seeks to recruit individuals in connection therewith. In view of the problems which have arisen in connection with this distinction between types of literature, I believe it would be useful to review briefly this aspect of the matter. While I have indicated to both you and Dean Towle orally my legal view of the matter, I think you should have this in writing as background in view of your memorandum and questions to me.

You may recall that in February, 1961, Paragraph IV, D of the Regulation on Use of University Facilities was amended to permit the distribution of literature, circulars, etc., at University of California campuses and facilities pursuant to regulations of the Chief Campus Officer seeking to preserve orderly administration of University affairs and the free flow of traffic. Subsequently, each campus adopted regulations relating to the distribution of literature. That which was approved by the Berkeley campus in my memorandum of March 29, 1961, permitted the distribution of all forms of non-commercial literature at various places on campus. The Bancroft-Telegraph area was not specified. The Sather Bridge was one of those included. The Bancroft-Telegraph area, you may recall, had been the object of some discussion in 1959 at which time this location had been proposed as a "free speech" area. No further action apparently was taken with respect thereto.



VICE CHANCELLOR ALEX C. SHERIFFS  
September 21, 1964

2.

It would appear that subsequent to the issuance of the Berkeley literature regulation, students began using the Bancroft-Telegraph area for distribution purposes even though the area had not been included in the regulation. Thus, Dean Towle's initial action in seeking to curtail all distribution in the Bancroft-Telegraph area was in literal conformity with the existing regulations even though the Berkeley campus administration appeared to have acceded over a period of time to this departure from the strict letter of the Regulation.

The modification to which the Berkeley administration subsequently agreed was based, as I understand it, on an offer by various student groups to "self-police" the area with respect to the number and location of tables and the curbing of activities adversely affecting administration of campus affairs and traffic flow. The students, however, appear to believe that that portion of the modified directive which continues to make a distinction between various forms of literature is inconsistent with the basic concept of free distribution and hence is unacceptable. I have reviewed this distinction and am unable to find any basis for it either in law or university regulation. The particular matter under discussion in large part was the subject of my memorandum of May 3, 1961, in response to your earlier request for advice. I noted that because of the "wall of separation" doctrine relating to religious activities by public bodies distribution of literature on University facilities which attempted directly to advocate religious conversion or practice should be discouraged. Religious literature of an "informative" nature which merely informed of such campus religious meetings seemed acceptable. I noted, however, with respect to political material, the following:

"In connection with posting of political material, however, a different situation exists. There is no Federal constitutional prohibition of such activities, and the State Constitution and University Regulations require only that the University, as such, may not become involved in political activities. Our Regulations, for some time, have permitted political speakers on campus under certain circumstances. The new



VICE CHANCELLOR ALEX C. SHERIFFS  
September 21, 1964

3.

Regulation on posting and distribution of literature would seem similarly to permit the posting and distribution of partisan political literature. It is my understanding that such a situation was in mind when the new paragraph IV, D was drafted."

As the foregoing would indicate, there would appear to be no legal reason why partisan political literature not only specifically supporting or opposing a candidate or a proposition but also (if indeed a meaningful distinction can be made) urging the victory or defeat through appropriate votes of a proposition or candidate and suggesting action (within constitutional limitations as to free speech) and recruiting individuals therefor may not be permitted. Similarly, assuming that the Bancroft-Telegraph area is designated as a permissible literature distribution area, neither University-wide rules nor the Berkeley campus Regulation in point make any distinction as to the forms of non-commercial literature which may be so distributed. In other words, the limitation suggested with respect to the type of non-commercial literature which may be distributed in the Bancroft-Telegraph area is not consistent with the existing Berkeley campus Regulation and that Regulation would have to be amended accordingly.

I would appreciate a copy of the statement as it is finally issued.

Thomas J. Cunningham  
Vice President and  
General Counsel

cc: President Kerr  
Dean Towle



Copies of this draft have gone to BHN, AW, ER : Tom Barnes 291 - 13

DRAFT 291  
9849 See KAT's memo  
attached by 12/5/64

DRAFT

(Note: Nothing done with this  
after I showed it to ACS)  
(See my memo of 12/5/64)

December 4, 1964

Showed this to ACS. He believed  
this was not the time to issue such  
a statement. Recommended that  
we wait to see what the Pres.  
Position would be at Union Mtg  
scheduled for Dec 7. KAT

MEMORANDUM TO: Chancellor E. W. Strong

I am increasingly concerned over our administrative failure to clarify the several questions which appear to give substance to FSM demands and to the crisis now facing us. Of particular note is the absence of any statement on our campus or at a University-wide level which addresses the series of legitimate doubts surrounding the Regents' recent amendment to the regulations on use of facilities. Also critical, I believe, is our silence regarding disciplinary action which may follow for those students and student organizations that continue to defy existing University rules.

I know that your "advertisement" which appeared in the November 24 issue of the Daily Californian was an attempt to rectify this situation, in part, but I feel a more direct statement is needed. ~~because~~ It must now be abundantly clear that the very future of this University is at stake.

I therefore urge, as strongly as I can, that you promptly issue a "position paper" describing with precision the interpretations of policy which will be followed on this campus in the absence of (or pending) any such clarification from the President or the Regents. The balance of this memorandum incorporates the recommendations of my staff <sup>that you include these or similar remarks in a public statement</sup> in this connection.

On November 20, the Regents authorized a significant liberalization of the University-wide regulations on use of facilities. In substance, the policy now in effect on all campuses prohibits only the use of University facilities to promote unlawful off-campus action.



At Berkeley, the six faculty members of the now-defunct Committee on Political Activity have proposed reasonable methods of administering this policy. I have accepted their recommendations without qualification.

Despite these efforts, many students and faculty members continue to express real concern over the proper application of this policy and to doubt openly that it can be implemented without arbitrary and unconstitutional infringements on freedom of speech.

Last Thursday, President Kerr again spoke to this point in a manner wholly consistent with his Davis Charter Day Speech, delivered some months earlier. In part he said:

"This (FSM) protest has never been over 'free speech.' There has been and is freedom of speech in the University of California. The protest has been over organizing political action on campus. This is now allowed with the one qualification that unlawful action cannot be mounted on the campus. And it has been made abundantly clear that there is no 'double jeopardy' involved since students would be liable for University discipline for misuse of University facilities and would not be punished for the actual off-campus violations of law." (Italics supplied)

Consistent with this background, I wish to make absolutely clear that the policy, as applied on this campus, will violate neither freedom nor reason, nor common sense. Legal forms of community protest can now be mounted from the campus itself with responsibility for illegal acts which may occur solely a matter between the student-citizen and the courts. Quite properly, however, the campus may not be used to urge directly the commission of unlawful acts with absolute immunity from University disciplinary action. Such advocacy would patently abuse the privilege of using not public facilities but unique educational facilities which are specifically maintained for and open only to students and staff and their invited "guests."



This distinction is a critical one. It draws a clear line between advocating orderly picketing or even legal sit-ins, for example, and blockage of exits or destruction of property. It is my position that the former may properly be urged on this campus, as elsewhere, whenever one's conscience or convictions so dictate. But it must also be understood that University facilities will not be used as a sanctuary for mounting illegal attacks upon the surrounding community and that neither students nor their organizations will be permitted to impair the University's responsibility or its independence.

Let there be no mistake. On this campus there will be no witch-hunts and no Star Chamber proceedings; there never have been. Nor will advocacy which is ignored subject a student or an organization to discipline. But the institution will not be party to unlawful conduct which has its inception on the campus; and the issue is not conspiracy or solicitation to crime, which are criminal acts, but misuse of University facilities.

The debate over these and related questions has now engulfed the campus for nearly three months. It is time for all of us to return to the continuing business of this University. It is time for us to begin again. Accordingly, while I cannot and will not condone many of the activities which have engaged students and student organizations during this period, I am directing that all pending disciplinary charges growing out of this controversy be dropped effective immediately. Students who were arrested in Sproul Hall will have to answer for their actions in the courts; this is as it should be. And from this day forward, students who continue to defy law and order and existing campus regulations can expect to have their relationship with the University terminated.

KATHERINE A. TOWLE  
Dean of Students

KAT:js  
cc: President Kerr  
Vice Chancellor Sheriffs



(Not sent)

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BERKELEY: OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

Note: This was not sent to FWS at ACS's request. Wished to wait & see what Pres. → December 5, 1964

Kerr's statement would cover at the forthcoming meeting in the Greek Theatre on Dec 7.

KAT gave ACS his copy of this memo for the Chancellor's Office files so that she at least would be on record in Chancellor's office. KAT 12

Chancellor Edward W. Strong  
Office of the Chancellor  
3335 Dwinelle Hall  
Campus

Dear Chancellor Strong:

Those of us in the Dean of Students' office believe that much of the present unrest and mistrust on the part of students and faculty alike would be alleviated if a clear and immediate interpretation could be enunciated of the statement adopted by The Regents at their November 20 meeting concerning the use of University facilities for ". . . lawful campus action, not unlawful campus action."

Understandably there is legitimate concern as to the meaning of the latter clause. Doubts are expressed openly that this policy can be implemented without arbitrary and unconstitutional infringements on freedom of speech.

Members of the staff of this office are particularly sensitive to its interpretation because of the numbers of students (not just those of the FSM) who are deeply concerned about the matter and are seeking our advice and assistance in obtaining clarification. The Dean of Students' staff has studied possible interpretations carefully. We are convinced that the new liberalized regulation need not be in conflict with the already stated policy outlined by President Kerr in his 1964 Davis campus Charter Day address, and if we are interpreting correctly his remarks on Thursday, December 3, as reported in the San Francisco Chronicle, his reiteration of that policy:

"This (FSM) protest has never been over 'free speech.' There has been and is freedom of speech at the University of California. The protest has been over organizing political action on campus. This is now allowed with the one qualification that unlawful action cannot be mounted on campus. And it has been made abundantly clear that there is no 'double jeopardy' involved since students would be liable for University discipline for misuse of University facilities and would not be punished for the actual off-campus violations of law." (Italics supplied.)

It would seem abundantly clear then that this application of policy will violate neither freedom nor reason, nor common sense. Lawful forms of protest against the community can now be mounted from or advocated on the campus itself with responsibility for unlawful or illegal acts which subsequently may occur solely a matter between the student-citizen and the courts. In short, the University should not and will not attempt



- 2 -

to determine the constitutionality of advocacy: this is a matter for the courts. Further, there will be no witch-hunts and no "star chamber" proceedings; there never have been. And the customary handling of conduct cases would continue to prevail.

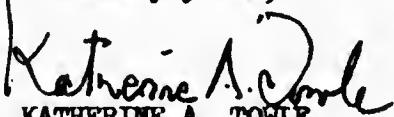
The debate over these and related questions has engulfed the campus for nearly three months. The Regents at their November meeting liberalized the rules concerning advocacy of political and social action on campus. A concise statement with respect to the meaning of "unlawful action" would, we firmly believe, clear that air and give us all opportunity to return again to the continuing business of the University. In view of the Academic Senate's meeting on Tuesday, December 8, where this crucial matter is sure to engage much of the discussions, I urge most strongly that such a statement from the Chancellor and/or the President be issued either at that meeting or prior to it.

We also recommend most earnestly that the University drop pending charges against the four students: Mr. Savio, Mr. Goldberg, Miss Goldberg, and Mr. Turner since they have now subjected themselves to legal action by civil authority. For the University to continue to press charges would seem to serve no useful or helpful purpose in the current campus crisis. I, for one, wish to be on record as opposed to further action against these students for their alleged acts of October 1 and 2. Further, I urge immediate public announcement of the dropping of the charges, if this recommendation receives favorable consideration.

These steps would go a long way toward dispelling current mistrust and frustration and would make easier the next task before us--that of implementing locally as soon as possible those sections of the so-called "Cheit Report" which you have already accepted.

You are aware, I am sure, that the Dean of Students' staff is ready always to offer whatever assistance it can to you personally and to your staff to help get the campus back on the road to reason and mutual trust.

Sincerely yours,

  
KATHERINE A. TOWLE  
Dean of Students

KAT:mh

cc: President Kerr  
Vice-Chancellor Sherriffs ,



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January 29, 1965

COPY

MEMORANDUM TO: Dean Towle

RE: Committee on Academic Freedom of the Universitywide Assembly

At your request, Leone Weaver and I represented this office before the statewide Academic Freedom Committee on the afternoon of January 26. The committee was in Berkeley in connection with its study of the "free speech controversy" and, as I understand it, was meeting with administrators, faculty members, and students in order to prepare a report to the statewide assembly which convenes on February 12. The experience was both interesting and, I think, painless insofar as we were concerned.

Because the committee was running behind schedule at three o'clock when we were to appear, Leone and I were invited to listen in on what turned out to be the final hour of committee questions directed to Mr. Earl Bolton, Miss Virginia Smith, and Mr. Al Pickerall. The major points covered in our presence had to do with the President's use of such terms as "radical left," "extreme," and "anarchy" in describing the FSM; and, perhaps more interesting, the communications between the President and the Governor on December 2 and early in the morning of December 3, culminating in the mass arrests in Sproul Hall on that latter date. In substance, Vice President Bolton described a series of telephone conversations between them terminating shortly before midnight with the understanding that no action was required at the moment and that the President and Governor would talk again at 10 a.m. on the third to determine what, if any, change in posture then seemed desirable; and then a call from the Governor perhaps an hour later informed the President that he (Brown) had ordered police intervention. As Mr. Bolton told it, this decision came as a total surprise to the President, could not have been altered by him if he had been so inclined, and was based on reasons totally unknown to him (Bolton) to this day.

The committee closed its discussion with the President's representatives by posing an additional eight or so questions which, I would assume, will be answered (to the extent they are answerable) in writing or before the committee at some later time. In substance, these queries included the following:

1. Newspaper reports following the November 20 Regents' meeting indicated that the constitutionality of University policy on use of facilities had been the subject of study for some years. What is the history of that inquiry?
2. Is there any reasonable explanation for the marked differences in interpretation of this single policy among the several campuses?
3. What effect does The Regents' action of November 20 have on "sectarian religious activity"?
4. Why did there exist basic differences in policy as between the University and the state colleges, particularly since the latter appear to have been considerably more "liberal"?



Memorandum to Dean Towle

Page 2

January 29, 1965

5. Why were new charges brought against four students after November 20 when it appears that FSM was then in a state of decline?
6. What are the differences, in philosophy and practice, which obviously exist between the President and Chancellor Strong?
7. Is there any policy affecting the presence of non-University police on campus - should there be if none presently exists?
8. The action taken by The Regents on November 20 has been described as a "liberalization" of policy - is it not, in fact, a complete reversal of policy?

Mr. Bolton, Miss Smith; and Mr. Pickerall were excused and the committee turned its attention, for the next hour or so, to us. Basically, three questions were posed:

1. What prompted (and preceded) your letter of September 14 which sought to "close off" the Bancroft-Telegraph area? And did we know the area was University property before this fall?
2. Would the controversy have ended, in our opinion, if the Chancellor had announced on September 28, or shortly thereafter, the substantive changes in policy which were in fact approved by The Regents on November 20? When did we, as a staff, first learn that these reversals in policy were imminent? How did we, as a staff, feel about enforcing rules which were "obviously" going to be changed?
3. In our opinion, would the FSM have "died" over the Thanksgiving recess had not new disciplinary proceedings then been initiated against the four leaders? Would the FSM now likely die if pending charges in the courts were to be dismissed?

My answers, and Leone's, were as frank and honest as we knew how to make them. In sum, we described (with numbers corresponding to those above):

1. The summer meetings which led to your letter; the several problems presented in the Bancroft-Telegraph area beginning last spring and running through the summer months; your opposition (and Dean Williams') to the unilateral closure of the area; the specific instructions which led to the issuance of your letter, "under protest"; and the approval of that letter (and subsequent clarifications) by the Chancellor's Office at least.
2. The real difficulty in determining whether or not the controversy might have ended in early October because of the "times," because of the obvious and early successes which FSM tactics were enjoying, because other grievances, real or imagined, could have served as competent vehicles for continuance of the struggle, and because of the personal sense of "power" which some of the leaders were experiencing; the fact that we knew, early in October, that



Memorandum to Dean Towle  
Page 3  
January 29, 1965

Judge Cunningham's office was "torn" between those who urged maintenance of the status quo and those who urged a distinction between "lawful" and "unlawful" speech or activity; our real ignorance as to the substance of The Regents' action until it was publicly announced on November 20; our conviction that the rules should be changed coupled with our lack of knowledge that they "certainly" would be; and the fact that staff morale remained high but could easily have been higher.

3. Our reluctance now to guess at "what might have been" in late November and our "warnings" to the Chancellor's Office at the time that what did happen would happen if new charges were brought; and my own opinion that no court penalty at all could be as dangerous, in terms of FSM's future and strength, as an overly harsh and unreasonable sentence.

Leone may well have additional comments to offer once she has read this. In any case, it was a pleasure to represent this office before the committee. It seems to me to be time to look honestly and openly at the past five months - and our comments to the committee represented an earnest effort to do just that. I sincerely hope that we did not place you or the office in a difficult spot by assuming this posture.

GEORGE S. MURPHY  
Assistant Dean of Students

GSM:ah

cc: Dean Williams  
Dean Van Houten  
Mrs. Leone H. Weaver



This copy was sent to Dean  
Towle in March, 1965 by  
Mrs. McLaughlin.

291 - 21

February 26, 1965

My dear Mr. Erickson,

I have followed the recent occurrences at Berkeley with great interest since, because I audited in 1963 and 1964, I watched the situation between Bancroft Way and Saither Gate with apprehension. All rules were broken this summer. They were constantly retreating toward Saither Gate. I heard and saw them recruiting for the Students' National Council on the campus, heard the orators surrounded by a couple of hundred students, urging them to join the sit-ins in San Francisco, and saw the solicitation.

That there would be difficulty was easily recognized. I have been one of those people who have been very critical with the inapt handling of the situation.

I read the account in the last magazine with great care and I must confess my indignation. In one respect, I suppose the only thing you could do was repeat what happened, instead of offering explanations of why it happened. However, I am especially indignant of pinning the focal point on Dean Towle. Knowing her fine judgment in handling students, I know what her method would have been. I also have great respect for Chancellor Strong. Now, in our chain of command, there is one person in between Dean Towle and the Chancellor. This person is one the students have never found helpful in any way, shape or form, and yet he is still there.

This whole thing should never have been allowed to happen. What should have been done was to call the students together and discuss with them the pressures that were being brought to bear on the Administration.

It has been very hard on the alumni to have had this



Page 2.

humiliation of our great University.

I may add that among my acquaintances, those to the far left or those to the far right, no one has taken the part of the students, and we've all been bewildered that the thing was so badly handled.

To sum up my attitude, may I say that I think the extreme rightists in the Administration gave the extreme leftists in the students the chance they had been waiting for.

I write this with regret.

Very sincerely yours,

(Mrs. Alfred McLaughlin)

Mr. Erickson  
Secretary of the Alumni Association  
Alumni House  
University of California  
Berkeley 4, California



## CALIFORNIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
BERKELEYRICHARD E. ERICKSON  
*Executive Manager*

March 5, 1965

ALUMNI HOUSE  
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720  
Area Code 415 - 848-6163

Mrs. Alfred McLaughlin  
3575 Clay Street  
San Francisco 18, California

Dear Mrs. McLaughlin:

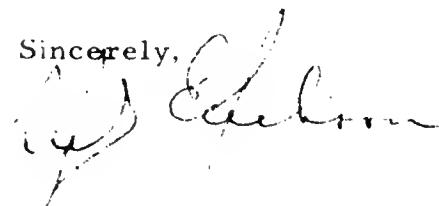
Your great personal concern regarding our University is certainly understood and appreciated. I am sorry that you did not find our February issue of the California Monthly to your liking, but allow me to assure you that our objective and our sincere effort was to produce an issue which, in its news section at least, reported the sequence of events and the facts as available information would provide.

It is my personal opinion as it is obviously yours that there is much that has not come to light yet relative to these past events and I have many suspicions which unfortunately at this time could not be substantiated. Like yourself, I am a great admirer of Dean Towle's, and we certainly in no way attempted to intentionally accuse her of any wrong doing. I personally feel that under the circumstances Katherine conducted herself with unbelievable restraint and dignity. By such action she has added to her stature and certainly added a great number of new friends and admirers.

One of these days, I sincerely hope that the complete story will be presented and allow the "chips fall where they may". Unfortunately, the Alumni Association is rather powerless to force the issue but I can also assure you we are doing what we can to make known such a need.

Again, thank you for taking time to express your concerns to me and best wishes.

Sincerely,



REE:cm



# BERKELEY'S DEAN OPPOSED THE BAN

**Students' Official Says That  
She Was Ordered to Act**

By WALLACE TURNER

Special to The New York Times

BERKELEY, Calif., March 13

The dean of students at the University of California here said in an interview today that she had opposed the administrative actions that led to the Free Speech Movement student revolt last fall.

Miss Katherine A. Towle, who issued the controversial order on Sept. 11, said that she had not wanted to issue it then or in that form. She said that she thought it should have been discussed first with student leaders and should have been issued in a form to which substantial agreement had been achieved in advance.

She made the statement as her University of California Regents met to decide whether to accept the resignations of the university's president, Dr. Clark Kerr, and the acting chancellor at Berkeley, Martin Meyerson.

#### Activity Was Prohibited

When political activity was prohibited on a 60-by-26-foot strip of sidewalk near Sproul Hall student groups organized the Free Speech Movement and threw the campus into turmoil.

The gradual escalation led to the replacement of the chancellor here, Dr. Edward W. Strong, last Jan. 2, and the recent announcements by Mr. Meyerson, his successor, and President Clark Kerr that they intended to resign.

Yesterday and today newspapers around the Bay area have carried long excerpts from papers produced by Dr. Strong. The total effect of these accounts has been to defend Dr. Strong's actions and to criticize the Regents and Dr. Kerr for removing him as chancellor.

Dean Towle's answers to pointed questions in an interview in her office made it clear that Dr. Strong had acted against the advice and wishes of at least one important member of his staff.

#### The School Had Winked

The strip of ground involved in the initial stages of the dispute was just outside the entrance pillars to the university campus at the end of Telegraph Street. The university had winked at use of this buckled-over strip for political activities in violation of the general ban that applied to all university property.

Mrs. Towle is a distinguished educational administrator and the first director of women Marines, in which she holds the rank of colonel. She was inter-

overlooks the plaza where the Hall, a few yards from the riots and demonstrations of the area. At this meeting the question of political use of the small strip of campus was raised last September.

When she came back to Berkeley last August after a month's vacation, she found a note from Dr. Alex Sherriffs, the vice chancellor for student affairs. The note raised questions about political use of the strip.

"I shoved it aside," she said, in pointing to a stack of papers on her desk. "It sat over there for ages."

The note from Dr. Sherriffs was the result of this chain of events:

During the Republican National Convention in San Francisco in July, The Oakland Tribune received a call saying that students for the floor demonstration in support of Gov. William W. Scranton's cussed first with student leaders candidacy were being recruited and should have been issued in at tables on the sidewalk.

#### Question From Newspaper

A reporter from The Oakland Tribune called Richard P. Hafner Jr., in the campus public affairs office. Mr. Hafner said he had assumed that the tables were on the sidewalk. The Tribune's inquiry of city officials showed that no permit had been issued, and the most of the sidewalk area was actually owned by the university and that no permit was required.

Inquiry again was made of Mr. Hafner, who asked the chancellor's office if it were true that the university owned much of the area used by the political activist groups. He was told that it did. Small plaques in the brick sidewalk establish the boundary lines.

"I measured it," said Dean Towle. "It's 26 feet wide by my yardstick."

A meeting was held in July to discuss the control of bicyclists who were becoming a menace to foot traffic in front of the Student Union and Sproul Hall.

The meeting was held in July discipline four student leaders and the campus erupted into

students, university employees and sympathizers. Dean Towle said she did not approve of this.

But Jan. 2 Dr. Strong was out as chancellor. At this time, it was said that he was given an indefinite leave for reasons of health. Yesterday he denied this, saying, "No, I was not ill." He said he had been given

Mr. Krowland has never pressured anyone to do anything about it."

William F. Knowland, the last week when three student operating head of the Oakland paper, was Senator Barry Goldwater's campaign chief in California with four-letter-word vulgarisms and to shout them over a have believed that he initiated public address system. This was the order that started the student disturbances. Mr. Hafner's statement contradicts this.

**Wanted to See Students** When she was told to draw up the order forbidding political use of the area, Dean Towle said that she wanted to wait until she could talk to the students. "One of the things that bothered me," she said, "was that this was done in a hurry."

She said that her objections were overridden and that Vice-Chancellor Sherriffs directed her to draw up the order. She mailed it to leaders of student organizations. Within a day or so many of them called on her in a body and offered a set of objections.

"Most of these I agreed with and I would have made administrative changes," she said, "but some involved policy which I could not change."

In November the Board of Regents required changes in university rules somewhat along the line indicated by the student protests. This cooled the fires and calm settled for a few days.

#### Erupted Into Sit-In

Then the university moved to discipline four student leaders and the campus erupted into

the sit-in in Sproul Hall that ended with the forcible ejection of the protesters. The Student Union and Sproul Hall

and arrest of about 700



April 26, 1965

291 - 25

Dear Dean Towle,

I heard recently that you have resigned as Dean of Students. I'm not sure what I can say, except that many, many students will miss you — and that Cal will not quite be the same after you leave.

I especially wanted to write to you because of the events of this past semester and how they affected me. First of all, let me say that I have nothing but respect and admiration for you as a person and as a Dean. Last semester was very trying. Many students in and out of FSM said, publically and privately, disparaging remarks about "the Administration." At times, you as a representative were pointed to, and referred to as an "enemy" of the students. I feel that I can say that such remarks where you were concerned were only made



-2-

by student who had not met with you; and they reflected only the despair and dislike many students felt with respect to the Administration as a whole.

In fact, most of the students involved in that struggle lamented the fact that "Kearns couldn't make policy." We believed, and I especially feel, that difficulties between students and the administration could have been solved without strife and/or confrontation if you and the members of your office had more "power."

Perhaps the future for Cal will be great — perhaps strife and battles will continue to rage. To be sure, the Moyer proposals before the Regents tend to lead one to expect the latter.

As I look around, I already see the crises brewing. One important change must come about, if we



-3-

as an academic community hope to move forward together. That change is structural, and therefore difficult. It's a system of explicit guarantees for the student, which define "conduct becoming an administrator" in explicit terms. Included in the Students' Bill of Rights must be channels for rule changes, even if the Chancellor may disagree. This is a necessity! Because as long as students must break rules to test their validity, no orderly procedures can be established.

Well, anyway, I wanted to give you my impressions, because I feel to say them to you, as to say them to an educator, interested in students.

I too, am leaving Cal in Jan. My plans include the Masters in the Art of Feasting, at the University of Chicago. I have been



awarded a full tuition scholarship.

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After that, I plan to teach high school or Junior College.

Leaving Cal is a mixture of relief and nostalgia. I'm anxious to begin new experiences and meet new people and see new places. I'm sorry to leave the familiar surroundings of Berkeley and the Cal campus. I know I will miss many students, many Deans, and a number of professors.

Relief - yes, I'll be relieved to leave as well. I sometimes get tired of the pressure and tension of being a student activist. Arrests, discipline, phone calls and special delivery letters - it's trying to be sure. But I know that this will be my life as long as I speak out on issues, and refuse to fall into the quiet mainstream of life.

Well, it's been my pleasure to get to know you. I hope your life will be full of the rewards you deserve. Respectfully,

Jackie Goldberg.



## AWARDS AND ACTIVITIES

Nathan: Is there anything that you would like to say about what you have been doing since? Because it is your life and career we're still interested in.

Towle: There are a few things we might put in just to make the record more complete. You mentioned, for instance, the Benjamin Ide Wheeler award.

Nathan: Yes. I would like to have a list of that and the other honors that have come your way, together with citations, and that sort of thing.

Towle: I received two awards from the Navy. A letter of commendation--it was originally a Letter of Commendation with Ribbon; then it became the Navy Commendation Medal. I received that in 1946 for my wartime service. The citation is signed by James Forrestal, who was the Secretary of the Navy. I also was awarded a Legion of Merit, presented to me in 1953, just as I finished my service as director of women in the regular service and was retiring from the Marine Corps. The citations for these two medals are included in this history.

I also received in 1952 an honorary LL.D. from Mills College.

Nathan: Yes. And there must have been a citation with that.

Towle: And there's a citation with that. Really a very cute one, "From the Halls of Montezuma to" something or other. [Laughter] Oh, yes, I came out from Washington to receive it. I remember getting a telephone call in Washington from Lynn White who was then president of Mills. He said the Trustees would like to present me with an LL.D. if I could be there in person to accept it.



# Mills College

To all to whom these Letters shall come Greeting  
 The Trustees of the College by the authority vested in them and on  
 the recommendation of the Faculty have conferred upon

**Katherine Amelia Towle**

from the halls of California to the shores of the Potomac known as a modern Athene —  
 wisdom in arms, the degree of

**Doctor of Laws Honoris Causa**

With all the Rights Privileges and Honors thereto appertaining

Given at Mills College in the State of California  
 on the eighth day of June, in the Year of Our Lord  
 One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-two.

*S. L. Green*  
 President of the College

*I. D. Shantz*  
 President of the Board of Trustees





Honorary Degree Recipients - Mille College Commencement Exercises - Sunday, June 8, 1952.

Left to right (top row) Dr. Lillian Moller Gilbreth, Ruth Leach, Helen Crocker  
Russell, Col. Katherine Towle, Esther Dayman Strong.  
Left to right (lower row) Agnes de Mille, Georgia O'Keeffe, Elinor Raes Heller.

Mille College President Lynn White, Jr., at left.



Towle: He added, "It can't be done in absentia." And I said, "I'm coming if I have to walk." [Laughter] I remember being in my white dress uniform, all very fancy.

Nathan: Did the Wheeler Award come next?

Towle: I think so. That was in October of 1965, and I have a citation for that, too. I have a lot of clippings about my retirement here, as well as about the Wheeler Award. I can get them together for you, or possibly for my papers in the University Archives.

Nathan: The Wheeler Award was kind of fun because it was hometown.

Towle: It was, this was hometown. Since 1929 it has been bestowed biennially on an outstanding citizen of Berkeley, selected by a committee of townspeople and sponsored by the various service organizations of Berkeley. I'd gone east, and then got the word that they wanted to present it to me. I was planning to be gone for about three weeks but I stayed only ten days and was right back here to receive it at a very nice luncheon meeting arranged by the Service Clubs of Berkeley. Got any medal I could in those days. [Laughter] Not long afterward, the Berkeley Soroptimist Club extended honorary membership to me. At the award luncheon, President Sproul read the citation and presented the handsome medal to me.

Nathan: I do think it's gracious to show enthusiasm instead of saying, "Oh, dear, one more award."

Towle: I haven't had that many, you know. I think it's fun, anyway. And I am only the third woman to have been awarded the Wheeler medal. Aside from my University connections, I haven't done too much in the community. While I was working, I didn't have much chance to.

For a while, I think it was when I first came back to the University after the war, I was on the Board of Directors of the Berkeley Chapter



Towle: of the American Red Cross, but for such a short time it's hardly worth mentioning. All the years I served as Dean of Women and later as Dean of Students, I was a member of the University YWCA Advisory Board. Then, of course, there were other things I was active in on the campus besides just student-oriented organizations. I've been a long-time member of the Women's Faculty Club. In fact, I've been a member since 1925.

Nathan: They owe you a free lunch by now.

Towle: [Laughter] Well, they did a very nice thing. When you retire, they make you an honorary active member without dues. Which I think is very generous of the club, but probably not very sound business. [Laughter] I've always enjoyed my association with the Women's Faculty Club, and have served in the past on its board of directors. I didn't give up my membership while I was away from Berkeley all those years. I always maintained it.

I would like to make special mention here of a few singularly heartwarming and generous things that have happened on campus during the past six or seven years on my behalf which are for the benefit of students at Berkeley.

You will recall that in the early part of this history in recounting my Marine Corps experiences, I spoke of Colonel Ruth Cheney Streeter (Mrs. Thomas W. Streeter of Morristown, New Jersey), and how we became firm friends during the days we served together during World War II.

In October, 1962, Mrs. Streeter presented to the Regents a \$20,000 endowment fund to establish scholarships for undergraduate men on the Berkeley campus. This was in honor of my having been appointed Dean of Students. The scholarships are known as the Katherine A. Towle Scholarships. Later, in October, 1967, Mrs. Streeter made another gift to the Regents, amounting to more than \$5,000 for the establishment of the Katherine A. Towle Gift and Loan Fund "in honor of the first woman to become Dean of Students at the University of



Towle: California." The income from this fund is shared equally by the Dean of Men and Dean of Women "for the purpose of making gifts and loans to such students on the Berkeley campus as they shall deem worthy."

Nathan: That's a delightful way to remember someone. That really is very touching.

Towle: These were wonderful things for her to have done, and nothing could have pleased me more.

As if this recognition from an old friend was not enough, I also was singularly honored by having the Mekatina Building Fund Association (one of the earliest of the women's house-clubs on campus) request the Regents to name its scholarships for women, established in January, 1966, "in honor of Katherine A. Towle, Dean of Students Emeritus." These scholarships, in the same amount as those given by Mrs. Streeter, are awarded each year to undergraduate women students.

So you see that now, owing to the great generosity of good friends, I have "twin" scholarships--boy and girl--certainly appropriate for a dean of students!

Nathan: The scholarships are certainly a pleasant link with the campus. Do you get down to Hertz Hall at all for musical events?

Towle: I don't get down nearly as much as I'd like to. The reason is because I do have some bothersome eyes and find it very hard sometimes to drive at night. This is the only limitation I have on my activities, and it is a real one. But it is just one of those things that comes with advancing years, I suppose.

I'm not doing anything very startling at the present time--a little volunteer work and just enjoying, really, being home, seeing friends around here. I love this little hilltop home, and it is a pleasure to be able to spend some time in it. I travel some, like my trip to the Orient last



Towle: year. Occasionally I go to the campus; not often, but when I do, I always enjoy it. For about six or seven months after I retired I didn't go to the Dean of Students office at all, because I didn't want anyone to feel that I was coming to check up, or anything of that sort. Now, after three years, it's quite different and I do drop by occasionally to say hello. Many of the old staff are still there; some are new.

Nathan: There is sort of an understanding on campus that people who are emeritus are welcome.

Towle: Oh, yes, yes, indeed. That part is very pleasant. I can't imagine not having the University some part of my life; it has been for so long.

In this Centennial year of the University (1968), two of the very nicest and most gratifying things have happened to me personally.

Early in the year, I was selected a charter member of the Berkeley Fellows, "an honorific society of one hundred distinguished friends of the Berkeley campus," established "to honor the One Hundredth Anniversary of the University of California." Our installation was a most enjoyable formal dinner at Chancellor and Mrs. Roger Heyns' campus home, University House, on February 24, 1968.

The second event which really was the "crowning glory" of my University career was the bestowal upon me at the June, 1968, Commencement Exercises of an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. To add to my happiness and pleasure, I was presented for the degree to President Hitch by Chancellor Heyns. Here is a copy of the citation from the commencement program.

Doesn't this seem a good place to bring this to a close?



## APPENDIX I

Katherine A. Towle:  
Speech to Century Club  
(Early 1954)

At first glance, or to the uninitiated, it may seem a little difficult to see much connection between a director of women in the Marine Corps and a Dean of Women. I can assure you, however, that I have had occasion to reflect more than once in the past few weeks that my job in the Marine Corps, especially during those last five years I was on active duty, was really just getting me in training for my present assignment at the University. The difference between being the chief administrator for some 2,500 women Marines and of some 4,500 college women is more one of numbers and degree than type of responsibility.

To the Marine Corps I was in essence their Dean of Women, and to me as their senior woman officer, they turned for recommendations and guidance in all matters and policies affecting women in the Corps. Although having women on duty was not new to the Marine Corps in wartime, it definitely was a new departure in peace time, and the problem of "Now that we've got them, what do we do with them?" the Marine Corps gladly placed in my lap. I observed, however, that when all was going smoothly, the generals usually referred proudly to the distaff side of the Corps as "our lady Marines;" when any of them misbehaved or were troublesome, they were invariably referred to stiffly and a little accusingly as "your girls." I am sure it was only with great restraint that they were not designated "your brats."

When the Marine Corps learned of my University appointment, their amazement at my wanting to take on another full-time assignment when my tour of duty was completed, was matched only by the comment of an eastern acquaintance when she heard the news. "Of course I think it's wonderful," said she, "but the most cheering thing about it is to know that any woman over 45 can get such a good job."

It is my observation that young women, whether they wear a uniform of one of the armed services, or the campus uniform of skirt and sweater are pretty much the same.



Those in the services represent as divergent backgrounds, tastes, abilities, and probably behavior as the students on any campus such as the University's. The problems, with respect to general welfare, are basically the same; their likes and dislikes are as pronounced and expressed as vocally; their interest in young men as healthy and as preoccupying. Even their "acceptance" in the military services is becoming as matter of fact as it has long been in co-educational institutions.

Another point of similarity is their respective ages. The average age of entering college students is 18 years; and the services are required by law to set 18 as the minimum age for the enlistment of women. I know of no service which does not require the age of at least 21 years for commissioning of women officers, and all require a bachelor's degree or equivalent educational background.

I spoke a moment ago of the "acceptance" of women in the services. One reason I acceded to the Marine Corps' request in 1948 to return to active duty and to become its first director of women in the regular corps, was the challenge it presented to help women in uniform become firmly established on what we thought at the time would be a peacetime basis. June, 1948, had seen the passage of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, which opened, for the first time in our history, the field of military service to women as a career, as distinguished from an emergency wartime basis.

I must admit that at first I had my own doubts as to the desirability or chances of success of such a venture. After all, this trying to break into a strictly masculine field of occupation might prove unwise as well as impossible. I must confess, too, that my personal qualms were based on my aversion to anything which might be termed "feministic." I have tremendous pride in being a woman, and in women's accomplishments, but I am not a feminist at heart, and never could be.

Then I reflected upon the literally hundreds of useful jobs which women had performed so creditably and so quietly during World War II. I knew from three and a half years' personal experience during the war what an important contribution women had made to our national defense and economy, and it seemed to me that here was an opportunity to help prove unequivocably to this country



that women in uniform, given half a chance, could be equally useful and effective in peacetime. Too often and for too long there had been remarks to the effect that women joined the services for glamour or to show off to the men. Well, the rigors of military life and the often dull, routine but necessary jobs, performed like as not under the most difficult circumstances, were hardly glamorous. Those of us who knew the quiet, uncomplaining and often gallant way women performed the unaccustomed and arduous tasks given them, felt it our duty to put our detractors straight on a few points, especially when we were accused of liking to wear the uniform because we could then more legitimately ape the men.

It also seemed to me that since military service now offered one more occupational field for women, that was so much the better. It would be challenging as well as rather fun to have a hand in establishing the peacetime utilization of women in the services.

This feeling was, I am sure, a "throw-back" to the pioneer spirit of my Vermont grandfather who, as a very young man, was lured by tales of adventure and fortune-seeking to set out across the Isthmus to California. It is also a fact worth recalling that the legislation which I have already referred to, which permitted a place in the regular army forces in peacetime was urged, not by the women, but almost entirely by top-ranking military men (among them General Eisenhower, General Bradley, and Admiral Nimitz). This was a tribute in itself to the conduct and performance of women of all ranks who had served in World War II.

Having a share in establishing the acceptance of women and in determining their peacetime utilization were aspects of my last assignment in the Marine Corps which appealed especially to me, and which made the job of Director of Women Marines stimulating and rewarding, and often lots of fun. And here I might point out, in case you haven't realized it, that unlike most fields in which men and women work side by side, women in military service are guaranteed by law equal pay and privileges.

After a total of ten years' close association with young service personnel, I might be expected to have formed an opinion or two about them. I have, and in a nutshell it is this: the young men and women who wear



our country's uniforms are essentially as fine and conscientious a group of young citizens as we are likely to find. The countless routine military jobs are not, as I have said earlier, exciting, and yet they must be done. Military discipline, which makes a certain amount of regimentation necessary is often irksome; sometimes, I must admit, rather senseless. But there are few who buck these requirements of service life, and few who don't behave themselves.

I have only the utmost respect for our young service people. Having been so closely associated with them for so long, I came to value, as well as to respect, their sense of duty and responsibility. I came to know something of their hopes and disappointments, their aspirations and frustrations in a way I couldn't possibly have known had I not shared with them the feeling of comradeship and singleness of purpose which military service does engender, and been subject to the same military discipline as they. Many of these young service men and women make up our student bodies today; many others, cut from the same cloth, now in college are yet to see military service. Possibly you can understand, then, how I feel that my own years in uniform can serve me well as a Dean of Women.

A few years ago, I and the other women directors, were asked by George Fielding Eliot to comment on the subject, "Do women make good officers?" for a magazine article he was doing. It didn't take me long to reply. My answer, which went back by return mail was,

Some do and some don't. The same personal qualities of adaptability, leadership, tolerance, industriousness, and integrity are as important and necessary to a military officer, without regard to sex as they are to successful men and women in civilian pursuits. And just as no amount of indoctrination is going to make 'an officer and a gentlemen' out of a man unless he possesses these basic qualities, so similarly will no amount of training or teaching make 'an officer and a lady' out of a woman unless she, too, possesses them. The chief difference is that women seem to be willing to work harder at being good officers than most men.



I might add that Major Eliot in his article quoted me verbatim, and I heard no reverberations even within the Marine Corps.

As many of you may be aware, several deans of women served with distinction in World War II (the WAVES were sometimes referred to as the service of the deans). These women brought to their military assignments a knowledge and understanding of young women which proved of great value and assistance to their services. By the same token, it was interesting to observe after World War II how many women officers whose military assignments had brought them, for the first time, into close association with responsibility for the management and welfare of other women, turned to civilian fields where they could continue to enjoy similar satisfying relationships. Military experience had given these women a new-found confidence in their own capabilities for leadership, and a rich and responsive understanding of the problems and needs of American girls of every strata of society.

Now, I do not wish to imply that I think I know all there is to know about "deaning" merely because I have had military experience, or that being a Colonel of Marines makes it possible to know all the answers. Marines are not noteworthy for their modesty, but I don't think even they would feel that "deaning" can be learned in six easy lessons, or that just my 10 years in the Corps makes me eligible to speak the last word on the present generation of youth. I only hope to continue to draw on my experiences of the past, foremost among them my years in military uniform, to understand better possibly some of the problems that confront young Americans today.

Actually, most of my adult life has been concerned with successive generations of young people, and I have always found working with them stimulating and satisfying and always unpredictable. Each generation is different largely to the extent that the times in which it is growing up are different.

Of this generation, the characteristic which seems to stand out most clearly is their awareness of the world around them, and their intent, born of the stress and strain of uncertainty, to be enlightened and responsible citizens. Since the burden of our times must necessarily fall so heavily on the, one can have



only the greatest respect and tolerance for their critical approach, not only to their own problems of daily living, but to those which affect the larger world around them. They are far more mature and independent in every way than my or even several succeeding generations of college students ever were, and they will not be put off by evasiveness or complacency, or by false promises or platitudes.

Too many of them have worked hard--many of them in uniform--and too many of them will have to work hard, to protect the things they, and I hope we, believe to be worthwhile, for these young persons to be satisfied with less than an honest approach, sympathetic tolerance, and goodwill on the part of their elders who presumably are helping them to direct and guide their activities and assisting them to formulate honest thinking.



## APPENDIX II

Katherine A. Towle:  
Materials on Deposit in Bancroft Library

Assorted newspaper clippings

Secretary of Navy's letter on Legion of Merit (copy)

Marine Commandant's letter of commendation (copy)

PL 625 Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948

Invitation cards to White House May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1952

University Bulletin August 11, 1952

Booklet, University of California Policies Relating to Students and Student Organizations September, 1963

Williams memo: July 31, 1964, re meeting on bicycle riding (process copy)

List of off-campus student organizations to which Miss Towle's Sept. 14, 1964 memo was sent

Booklet, (mimeo) Information for Student Organizations 1964-1965 Miss Towle's personal copy, annotated by hand

Sherriffs' letter to Kerr, September 23, 1964 (carbon)

Agreement of Friday Evening, October 2, 1964, signed by Kerr and student representatives

Group of papers (carbons) September and October 1964

Letter and memo, Savio and Towle (process) October 6, 1964

Bolton's statement for Regents' meeting Oct. 1964 (process)

Memo, Towle to Strong (carbon) Oct. 12, 1964

Draft memo, Kerr to Committee on Educational Policy, Oct. 15, 1964

Memo, Towle to Strong October 19, 1964 asking for legal counsel's review of certain policies (process copy)

Memo on Free Speech area Oct. 21, 1964 (carbon)



Strong, memo to Academic Senate, Oct. 26, 1964 (process)

Resolution, ASUC Senate Nov. 2, 1964

Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Suspensions, Nov. 13, 1964  
Heyman, Chrm. (process copy)

Report of the Faculty Group as Amended by ASUC Senate  
Nov. 18, 1964

Copy, Strong's statement (to Daily Cal?) Nov. 22, 1964

Copy, Strong's statement to Academic Senate, Nov. 24, 1964

Copy, Strong's Letter to the Editor, Daily Californian,  
Nov. 24, 1964

University Bulletin (copies)

Nov. 16 and Nov. 30, 1964  
Dec. 14, 1964  
Dec. 7, 1964  
Mar. 22, 1965

Demonstration Resolution, ASUC Senate, Dec. 1, 1964

Copy, Chancellor's letter to the Campus, Dec. 1, 1964  
annotated by hand, Towle

Meyerson Jan. 3, 1965 statement

Political Action Rules, text of statement, Meyerson  
January 4, 1965

Memos (copies circulated to staff)

Meyerson to Towle January 14, 1965  
Towle to Meyer January 20, 1965  
Academic Freedom Committee to Berkeley Academic  
Senate January 5, 1965

California Monthly February 1965, with carbon of Miss  
Towle's unsent Letter to the Editor

Documents and hand-written memo re: People v. Savio, et al court case, April 1, 1965

Text (on seeing-eye typewriter cards) of remarks on award  
of Wheeler Award to Miss Towle, October 19, 1965  
(speaker not identified)

UC 105th Commencement brochure Miss Towle's LL.D. award  
June 15, 1968 2 copies



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Harriet Siegel Nathan

Graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1941 with an A.B. in Journalism. Was assistant women's editor and managing editor of The Daily Californian, then known as the Monarch of the College Dailies. Prepared President Sproul's biennial report to the legislature, 1942-44; wrote advertising copy; edited house journals; served on local and state boards of the League of Women Voters, primarily in the fields of local and regional government and publications. Returned to U.C. for a Master of Journalism degree in 1965. Wrote for the University's Centennial Record. Now doing research, writing, and editing for the Institute of Governmental Studies, U.C., Berkeley.













